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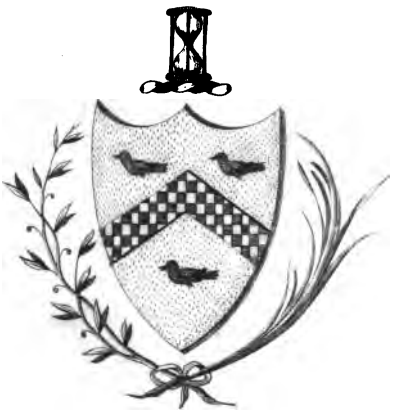

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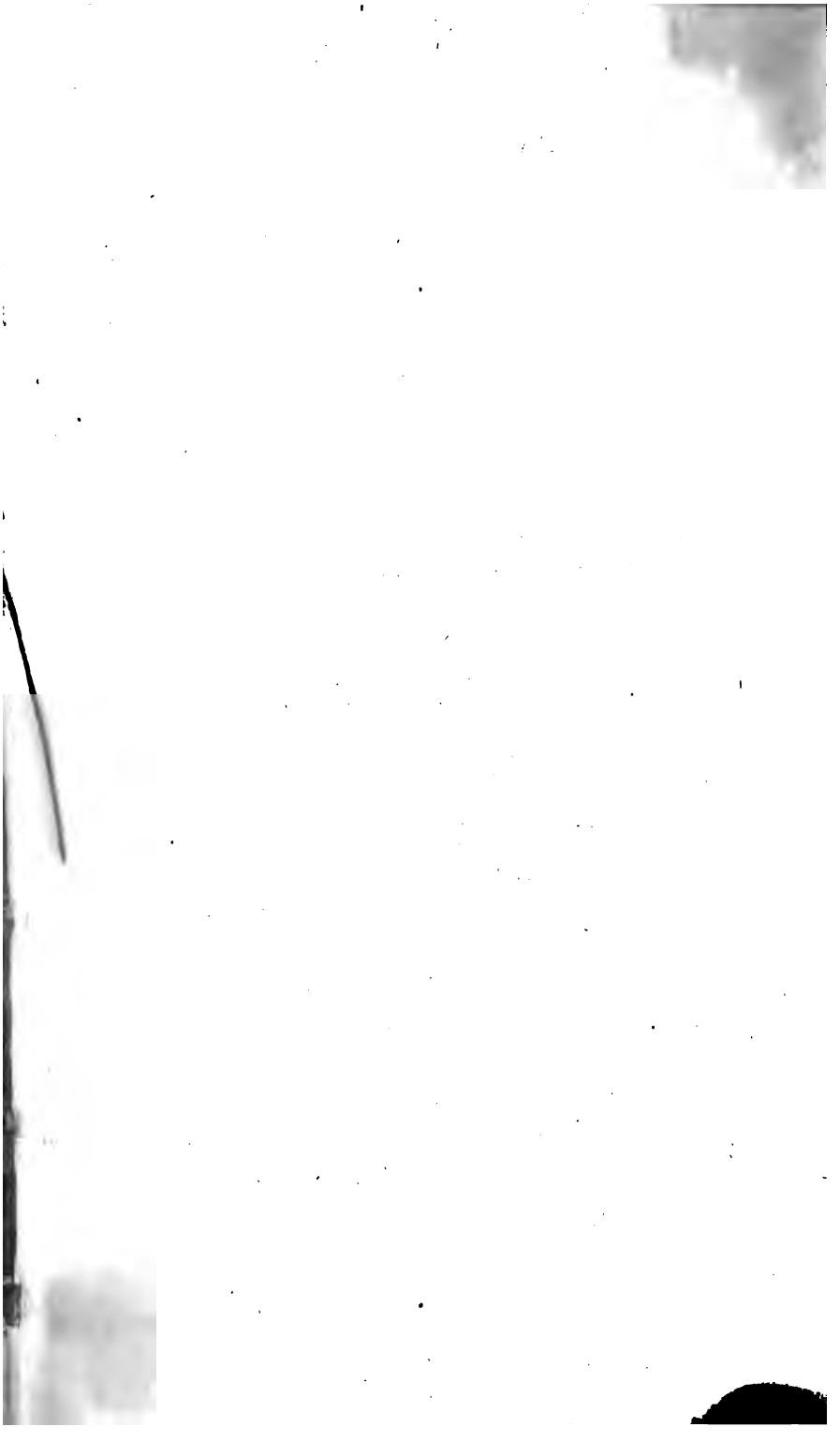

MODERN AGRICULTURE;

OR, THE

PRESENT STATE OF HUSBANDRY

IN

GREAT BRITAIN.

INCLUDING

AN ACCOUNT OF

THE BEST MODES OF CULTIVATION PRACTISED THROUGHOUT THE ISLAND;

THE OBSTACLES TO FARTHER IMPROVEMENTS;

AND THE MEANS BY WHICH THESE MAY BE MOST EFFECTUALLY REMOVED.

BY JAMES DONALDSON, DUNDEE.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. IV.

A ſimple ſcene! Yet hence Britannia ſees
Her ſolid grandeur riſe: hence ſhe commands
Th' exalted ſtores of every brighter clime,
The treaſures of the ſun without his rage:
Hence, fervent all, with culture, toil, and arts,
Wide glows her land: her dreadful thunder hence
Rides o'er the waves ſublime, and now, even now,
Impending hangs o'er Gallia's humbled coaſt;
Hence rules the circling deep, and awes the world.

THOMSON.

EDINBURGH:

PRINTED BY JOHN BROWN.

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ERRATA

Vol. I. p. 35. l. 21. dele *with*.
— II. p. 32. l. 27. for *breast*, read *breathe*.
p. 98. l. 14. for *mack*, read *moved*.
p. 212. l. 17. for *turnings*, read *limings*.
p. 409. l. 19. in some copies for *colour*, read *labour*.
— III. p. 8. l. 10. for *clear*, read *clean*.
p. 81. l. 20. after *and*, add *on each acre*.
p. 90. l. 6. for *ill-constructed*, read *ill-conducted*.
p. 149. l. 30. for *Kyler*, read *Kyloe*.
p. 153. l. 6. for *quality*, read *quantity*.
p. 154. l. 22. for *of*, read *on*.
p. 156. l. 6. for *curls*, read *turls*.
p. 157. l. 7. for *breeding*, read *fattening*.
— IV. p. 44. l. 7. for *Hamptonshire*, read *Hampshire*.
p. 65. l. 7. in place of "the intended new ridges are cut across the field, and new ridges again formed in the manner before described," *read* "the furrows are cut across the ridge, the labourers beginning at one end and working to the other; but no alteration is made in the original direction of the ridges."

MODERN

MODERN AGRICULTURE;

OR, THE

PRESENT STATE OF HUSBANDRY

IN

GREAT BRITAIN.

CHAP. XXIX.

General Obſervations on the preſent State of the Foreſts and Woodlands in Great Britain.

THE means by which the cultivation of our fields may be improved having been deſcribed at conſiderable length, another ſubject, "the State of the Foreſts and Woodlands," now demands attention. This, it is true, does not ſo materially concern the cultivators of the ſoil in the character of farmers as many others that have fallen under review; but, conſidering the preſent complexion of the times*, it muſt in a particular

* A threatened invaſion by the combined powers of France, Spain, and Holland.

particular manner intereſt every freeborn Britain, who is anxious to retain that independence for which his forefathers on many occaſions ſeverely bled, and which can only be preſerved by our preſerving the ſuperiority at ſea.

"The Royal Navy of England (ſays the great Blackſtone) hath ever been its greateſt defence and ornament; it is its ancient and natural ſtrength; the floating bulwark of the iſland; an army from which, however ſtrong and powerful, no danger can be apprehended to liberty; and accordingly it has been aſſiduouſly cultivated even from the earlieſt ages *."

In this ſuppoſed ſtrength, however, we ſeem to have indulged ourſelves till we have become indolent, and have forgotten that our ſtore is not inexhauſtible, or that there are people in other countries who, envying our liberty and our property, wiſh to turn our neglect to their advantage.

From the obſervations contained in the firſt volume reſpecting the ſupply of wood in each county for agricultural and other purpoſes, and particularly reſpecting the actual ſtate of what are called the Royal Foreſts, neither the preſent ſtock of timber, nor the means of future ſupply, appear to be ſuch as to give the inhabitants of a country, which, without a reſpectable navy,

* Blackſtone's Commentaries, vol. i. p. 417.

navy, muſt ſoon become tributary to ſome more powerful ſtate, a high opinion of the conduct of thoſe, whoſe peculiar duty it is to watch over the means by which, what Blackſtone calls the "national bulwark," can be erected or kept in repair.

It is not the writer's intention to blame one ſet of miniſters, or of foreſt-officers, more than another; but to ſtate generally, from what he has ſeen and learned to be the real ſtate of the nation, in regard to a ſtock of ſhip-timber, that the conduct of the officers of the crown in this reſpect, during the whole of the now almoſt expiring century, has been ſo uniformly remiſs, as to merit the moſt ſevere cenſure of every individual who wiſhes the extenſion of Britiſh commerce, or the continuance of Britiſh freedom.

Without bringing forward evidence to ſupport this aſſertion, it may by ſome be ſaid to be founded on falſe principles, and by others to be matter of opinion only, and in either caſe unworthy of regard. It will, however, appear in the ſequel, that the charge, ſerious as it may appear, is too well founded, and that the conſequences to be dreaded are no leſs ruinous than diſgraceful to the Britiſh nation.

The increaſe or decreaſe of timber in England, fit for building or repairing ſhips of war, was long a controverted point, as matters of opinion always are. Commiſſioners having, how-

ever, been appointed by Parliament ſome years ago to inquire into the ſtate of the royal foreſts, &c. the matter was aſcertained, and the decreaſe proved to be ſo great as ought to have given cauſe for general alarm, although it is believed not one meaſure likely in any eſſential degree to prove effectual for remedying the evil has ſince been adopted.

By the reports of theſe commiſſioners, as laid before the King and Parliament, it appears, that owing to the extreme negligence of thoſe who were appointed by the ſtate to watch over this ſource of national proſperity and ſecurity, the royal foreſts have in many inſtances become royal waſtes; and that Britain, great as it is called, is well known to be reduced to the neceſſity of depending on other countries for a ſupply of navy timber. In a word, while our wars and our commerce require immenſe additional ſupplies of ſhip-timber, our foreſts and woodlands have been allowed to fall into decay. A peruſal of the following extracts will eſtabliſh the fact: "In theſe reports (ſay the commiſſioners) we have endeavoured to explain the defects in the preſent ſyſtem of management; we have ſhown, that *the intereſt of the officers of the foreſts, and that of the public, are directly oppoſite to each other; and that ſuch has been the effects of the waſteful ſyſtem, that the woods, foreſts, and chaces belonging to the Crown, though*

though of very great intrinſic value, have furniſhed no more than 2000 *loads of timber annually to the dockyards* *.—That, beſides the value of theſe 2000 loads, and of all that the foreſts produced from the year 1761 to 1786, there has been expended on them a further ſum of L. 144,882 : 16 : 0; ſo that, inſtead of yielding any clear revenue whatever, they have actually brought a conſiderable loſs upon the public: *While the foreſts are ſo far from being in an improving condition, that they are every year growing worſe.*—That, according to the information we have received, there is *a general and alarming decreaſe* in the quantity of great timber growing in this country.—*That the quantity of oak-timber wanted for various internal purpoſes*, and for the ſhipping employed in the trade of this country, will be as much as can be ſupplied from private eſtates.—That the following ſtatement will ſhow the increaſe of commerce within the preſent century:

Imports in 1790, - -	L. 19,130,886	5	3
Imported in England alone in 1700,	5,907,175	1	10
Increaſe,	L. 13,223,711	3	5
Exports in 1790, - -	L. 21,643,953	1	2
Exports from England in 1700,	7,302,716	8	7
Increaſe,	L. 14,341,236	12	7

That

* See vol. i. p. 342.

"That the conſumption of oak-timber is probably greater than even the increaſe of the trade, becauſe the whole muſt now be carried on in Britiſh bottoms; whereas, previous to the American war, many ſhips built in that country were employed in our trade.—That if the royal foreſts ſhall be *improved and properly managed*, they may in time be brought to furniſh a ſupply, which will prove a competent ſecurity againſt the ſcarcity which there will otherwiſe be too much reaſon to apprehend.—On the whole (add the commiſſioners), we are perſuaded we ſhall not be thought to go beyond what is warranted by the information before us, when we form this concluſion: That if the proſperity of this country ſhall continue, the conſumption of oak-timber for its internal purpoſes, and for the ſhipping neceſſary for the whole of our trade, including that of the Eaſt India Company, will, at no very diſtant period, furniſh an ample demand for all that can be expected to be produced on private property in this kingdom; and ſuch is the preſent ſtate of the growing timber, and the proſpect of future ſupply, that this country will in all probability experience a fatal want of great oak-timber, and become dependent on other powers for the means of ſupporting her navy, if care be not taken to provide a ſupply in future, by the improvement and better management of the royal foreſts, and to reduce the conſumption

ſumption of it by the utmoſt care and frugality in the expenditure."

Were any perſon diſpoſed to doubt the correctneſs of the reports above alluded to, or the ſources of the commiſſioners information, they have ſtill other means of ſatisfying themſelves in regard to the deplorable ſtate of the royal foreſts. Gilpin, in his foreſt ſcenery, mentions a particular foreſt, the name of which the writer does not at preſent recollect, which contains between ſixty and ſeventy thouſand acres. This foreſt, about the year 1660, furniſhed, by his account, 500 oaks annually to the dockyards. The number is now reduced to ſixty; *that is, under one oak tree annually for every thouſand acres.*

The once large and thriving royal foreſt of Sherwood is now probably the moſt extenſive waſte capable of improvement of any in England. From a peruſal of the agricultural report of the county of Nottingham, in which that foreſt is ſituated, a pretty correct idea of the conduct of the ſuperior foreſt officers in the kingdom at large may be formed, by what is there deſcribed to be that of the Duke of Newcaſtle, who is Lord Warden of that foreſt. While the part of it belonging to the crown is allowed to continue in a waſte ſtate, we are informed what wonders the Lord Warden has performed in improving what is called "a foreſt break;" that is,

is, a tract of lands which was formerly part and portion of the foreſt, but perhaps, for his Grace's great attention in managing his Majeſty's trees, or for ſome ſuch onerous cauſe, diſforeſted and aſſigned to him as private property. "Amongſt theſe foreſt breaks (ſays the writer of that report) deſerves to be named, in the firſt place, Clumber Park, belonging to his Grace the Duke of Newcaſtle, between ten and eleven miles round, and containing in the whole about four thouſand acres, which may be ſaid to be a new creation within theſe thirty years, at which time it was a black-heath full of rabbits.—But now, beſides a magnificent manſion, and noble lake and river, with near two thouſand acres of plantations, above two thouſand acres are brought into a regular and excellent courſe of tillage." Notwithſtanding this meritorious example ſet by this Noble Duke as a proprietor, anxious, by the improvement of waſte land, to add to the general ſtock of the country; yet, whoever has travelled through Sherwood Foreſt, from the town of Nottingham by Mansfield, &c. to Bawtry in Yorkſhire, muſt be ſatisfied, that any encomium on his Grace's conduct as a private proprietor, in regard to the improvement he has effected on ſuch lands as were formerly part of the foreſt, muſt be conſidered as a ſatire on his public conduct as chief officer of that foreſt; many parts of which is, although not in its preſent

ſent ſtate of any value, capable of being improved by planting or cultivation.

The new foreſt in Hampſhire is the one of all others that is conſidered the moſt valuable, and on which moſt attention has been beſtowed. The foreſt officers have lately adopted a new mode of rendering a conſiderable tract of land in that foreſt *extremely productive*, although not of oak-timber. Three enclоſures, containing eight hundred and thirty-five acres, formed at the national expence, and for the expreſs purpoſe of the preſervation of timber, have been converted into a rabbit-warren *for the good of the Britiſh nation;* while other parts of the ſame foreſt, owing to the circumſtance of ſeveral of the under keepers being great dealers in hogs, are better ſtocked with ſwine than with trees. The conſequences reſulting from adopting theſe *new methods* of improving the value of the foreſt lands, are proved to be ſuch as might naturally be expected. In the report of the preſent ſtate of agriculture in Hampſhire, where the above two facts are ſtated, it is alſo mentioned, that by ſurveys made of the timber at different periods, it appears that an alarming decreaſe has actually taken place:

In 1608, there were eſtimated to be	315,477 loads.
And in 1764, there were only found	40,497
Deficiency in 156 years, -	274,980 loads.

But that report furniſhes facts, whereby we are enabled to place this matter in a ſtill clearer point of view:

In 1764, there were found, as above ſtated,	40,497 loads.
But by a ſurvey made in 1783, only	20,830
Decreaſe in 19 years,	19,667 loads.

This ought not, however, *in juſtice*, to be conſidered as a national loſs to the full amount of the value of nineteen thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty-ſeven loads of oak-timber fit for his Majeſty's dockyards. For, to counterbalance this *trifling conſideration*, the nation may, with conſiderable certainty, reckon on an increaſe of at leaſt one pig or rabbit to the general ſtock for every load of navy timber that appears to be deficient. This, the writer is aware, ſome people may be diſpoſed to conſider as no real improvement in the management of national foreſt lands; but there is every reaſon to believe, that the officers, who ought to know beſt, conſider it as highly beneficial, and a mode that ſhould be more generally adopted.

There is no man in the iſland leſs diſpoſed than the writer of theſe ſheets to treat with ridicule a great national misfortune, ſuch as he is ſatisfied the decay of the royal foreſts will ſoon prove, unleſs an immediate and total alteration in the management takes place; but as ſolid argument, from ſo reſpectable a quarter as the

commiſſioners appointed to inquire into the ſtate of the royal foreſts, &c. has had no effect in altering the conduct of thoſe who are moſt culpable in this reſpect, holding them up to public ridicule appears to be the only alternative. This ſeems the more excuſable, as, whether the evil ariſes from the negligence of a Noble Lord Warden, or the peculating diſpoſition of a humble ſwine-breeder, the conſequences to the nation muſt prove equally calamitous; and ſooner or later, if ſuch conduct is permitted, muſt have the effect of rendering the Britiſh people tributary to ſome more provident ſtate.

Many other circumſtances might be mentioned, were it neceſſary, to prove what the commiſſioners aſſerted, namely, "that the intereſt of the officers of the foreſt, and that of the public, are directly oppoſite to each other:" But it is of more importance to endeavour to point out a remedy; for unleſs the inhabitants of this country are to go along with Pope, in ſuppoſing that, in every caſe, "Whatever is, is beſt," they muſt ſee the abſolute neceſſity of a reform, or rather of a total alteration in the whole ſyſtem of foreſt management.

The miſerable ſtate of the royal foreſts cannot be ſuppoſed in every inſtance to ariſe from the negligence of thoſe who have the ſuperintendence of them. The code of foreſt laws, and the ſyſtem of management, were eſtabliſhed in ancient

times, and had more in view the preſervation of the deer than the timber. The depredations committed by the deer, and by the cattle belonging to thoſe having right of common, on the young ſaplings at an early period, often prevents any ſucceſſion of trees from getting up; inſomuch that, in ſome foreſts pretty well ſtocked with trees, ſcarcely a ſapling is to be ſeen. On the other hand, in the foreſts that are private property, and whence deer and cattle are excluded at improper ſeaſons, a regular ſucceſſion of young trees every where appears. For theſe and many other reaſons that might be mentioned, the beſt, perhaps the only plan that can be adopted with effect, would be to annul the foreſt laws; aboliſh the rights of commonage, by giving a compenſation in property-land in lieu of the common rights; and to lot and ſell off every acre of foreſt lands now belonging to the Crown; under ſevere reſtrictions, however, in regard to keeping ſuch an extent of them in woodland, as, if properly managed, would in time be more than ſufficient for ſupplying the neceſſary quantity of navy timber. Were this done, every purchaſer of a lot of foreſt lands would become his own lord chief-juſtice in eyre, lord warden, high ſteward, lieutenant, ranger, verderer, regarder, agiſtor, maſter, keeper, &c. all which offices he would perform with a due regard to the national proſperity; becauſe, by,

adopting

adopting ſuch meaſures as are beſt calculated to promote the growth of uſeful timber, his own intereſt would be advanced. The abolition of ſo many poſts and places may appear to ſome as a ſerious innovation; but it is the only radical cure for an evil which is on all hands allowed to have got to an alarming height; and which will at laſt be found the only remedy, however long the application may be delayed.

The public intereſt certainly requires, that ſo valuable a part of the landed property of the country ſhould not be ſuffered to remain longer in its preſent unproductive ſtate. The preſent ruinous plan of management ſhould be immediately altered, and other modes, and thoſe under the direction of different deſcriptions of men, ſhould be adopted for rendering them in ſome caſes uſeful nurſeries for timber, in others valuable corn and paſture fields; whereby the ſecurity of Britiſh independence, the agricultural produce, and the population of England, might be increaſed.

Becauſe the royal foreſts have for ages been neglected, or becauſe they are in many inſtances under laws and regulations in regard to management diametrically oppoſite to what ought in theſe times to exiſt, are by no means ſufficient reaſons why thoſe, who hold the reins of government, ſhould go on to treat with contempt every thing that can be ſaid on this important ſubject.

It

It would be more becoming of them, and more ſuitable to the genius of the Britiſh people, were they to give annually an account of the meaſures adopted for ſecuring a ſupply of timber for erecting a bulwark to defend this iſland from the incurſion of foreign foes, than to open, with much pomp and ceremony, a budget of the affairs of a company of merchants of England trading to the oppoſite ſide of the globe. In the one, every inhabitant of theſe kingdoms would feel himſelf concerned; in the other, ſmall is the proportion that is in any material degree intereſted. The ſucceſs of a trade carried on by a few individuals, and which might, in all probability, be more advantageouſly done by the abolition of theſe chartered rights, by which they have procured an excluſive privilege, ought not to be conſidered as meriting greater attention from the Britiſh ſenate, than the means of procuring a regular and ample ſupply of timber, ſuch as is neceſſary for building or repairing ſhips of war; for without theſe, our exiſtence, as a free and independent ſtate, is extremely precarious and uncertain.

While the royal foreſts remain ſubject to the foreſt laws, it is in vain to expect that any improvement in the mode of management will ever take place. The objects of the parties more immediately concerned are ſo inimical to the proſperity of the foreſts, and ſo oppoſite to the public

blic intereſt, as to render every attempt nugatory, without the intervention of the legiſlative authority. By that alone can the foreſt laws be aboliſhed; and the officers declared, what they really are, neither neceſſary nor uſeful. It appears, therefore, of leſs importance to point out the errors of a ſyſtem that was originally eſtabliſhed, not ſo much for ſecuring a regular and abundant ſupply of timber, as for the protection and preſervation of deer, than to make ſome remarks on the beſt methods of managing private woodlands.

Although it is highly probable that many of the old private woodlands, in ſeveral parts of England, have been raiſed from ſeeds ſown by hand, or by planting young trees, yet by far the greateſt portion is evidently parts and portions of ancient foreſts belonging at ſome period to the crown, but long ſince diſforeſted. Theſe are now under different ſyſtems of management. In many inſtances, particularly in Scotland, the proprietors have been induced, from neceſſity, avarice, or ſome other cauſe, to cut down all the timber, and to convert the remaining foreſts into coppices. The ancient private woodlands of theſe kingdoms may therefore be deſcribed as grounds ſet apart for growing coppice or timber only, or for the growth of timber and coppice, or underwood jointly.

Coppices are woods raiſed from the ſtools of timber

timber trees formerly cut down. The ages at which coppices are uſually felled or cut, and the uſes to which the wood is applied in the different diſtricts where ſuch woods are, have been particularly ſtated in the firſt volume.

The coppice woods, when the ſhoots are young, whether of oak, aſh, elm, or birch, or a mixture of theſe with other ſorts, are very little attended to in any part of the iſland. Fencing is the only particular which marks the difference between a good and a bad manager. At the ſame time, it may be remarked, that where the wood can be ſold for different uſeful purpoſes, at various ſtages of its growth, as is the caſe in many parts of England, an eſſential improvement, in the management of coppices, might be introduced with great propriety. In all ſuch ſituations, it would be profitable to the owners were the ſhoots thinned two or three times between each general cutting. The weedings or thinnings would do much more than defray the expence, while, by admitting a more free circulation of air, and by cutting off the ſupernumeraries, the principal ſhoots would advance more rapidly, and become by that means fit for ſale, perhaps two or three years ſooner than they do by being allowed to remain in a neglected ſtate. This is a circumſtance that particularly merits the attention of thoſe who are favourably ſituated, in regard to market, for the various productions

tions of coppices, as ſaving two or three years in the regular cuttings would materially enhance the value of the land ſo occupied.

The moſt approved method of diſpoſing of coppice, or other under-ſized wood, that the writer is acquainted with, is that practiſed in Northamptonſhire. When the ſeaſon for cutting arrives, which is during the winter months, or before the ſap begins to aſcend, that operation is performed by people employed by, and who work under the direction of, the owner of the woods or his agent. The part of the wood intended to be ſold is parcelled out into regular-ſized lots to ſuit the convenience of the intended purchaſers. The whole of the underwood growing upon each lot is indiſcriminately cut and laid in one direction. So ſoon as the operation of cutting is completed, and the wood parcelled out in a proper manner, a valuation is put on each lot or parcel according to its quality, and the whole is then ſold by public auction to ſuch perſons as incline to become purchaſers, who, over and above the price of the underwood, repay the expence of cutting. This is, however, by no means the general mode in which woods of this deſcription are cut. It is a very common but very bad practice, to ſell the coppice under the condition that the purchaſers are to be at the expence of cutting it down. This is often performed in ſuch a careleſs manner, that the

ſtools are ſo greatly injured that they either rot and die, or a few weak ſtinted ſhoots only ſpring up.

The price of coppice or underwood varies ſo exceedingly, that it is almoſt impoſſible to form any idea of the value of the acre. Perhaps L. 8 or L. 9 may be not far from the average price of coppices, not remarkably ſituated in regard to market, and when they are cut every twelve or fourteen years. But the value of coppices depends on many circumſtances; as, the ſorts of wood, the uſes to which they are applied, the price of bark, &c. In ſome parts of Kent, where hop-poles are in great requeſt, an acre of coppice will yield ſometimes L. 30 or L. 40 at a cutting. Whereas in Scotland, where the coppices are for the moſt part oak, and where the wood is chiefly uſed for fuel, or converted into charcoal, the value of the coppice conſiſts almoſt entirely in the quantity and quality of the bark, the wood being little more than ſufficient to defray the expence of cutting and peeling.

Several improvements in the management of coppices might certainly be effected were the owners to beſtow due attention. It frequently happens, that from miſmanagement in cutting many of the ſtools become uſeleſs, while ſcraggy thorns, brambles, &c. are allowed to ſpring up and occupy the place of more valuable plants. Were the owners of coppices in general to permit

mit their labourers, or other induſtrious poor people in the neighbourhood, to dig up the decayed ſtools and uſeleſs bruſhwood for fuel, under condition that they plant healthy vigorous ſtools in their place, the coppices by this management muſt neceſſarily become more valuable. Much damage alſo frequently happens from allowing the underwood to remain ſcattered over the ſurface of the wood for a conſiderable time after it is cut. Every perſon muſt be ſenſible, that if the cuttings are allowed to remain in this ſituation till after the young ſhoots begin to ſpring, it is ſcarcely poſſible to remove them without breaking or otherwiſe injuring theſe tender ſprigs. In all auctions of coppices, it ought to be an article of ſale, that the whole ſhould be carried off the premiſes in a limited time; and the foreſter, or wood-officer, ſhould receive injunctions to ſee this condition of the ſale ſtrictly implemented.

Much greater care is requiſite in cutting coppices properly than the owners in many caſes are diſpoſed to beſtow. It cannot be ſuppoſed that fifty or a hundred purchaſers, with their aſſiſtants, when allowed to uſe their axes with no other view than to cut the wood which they have purchaſed, without regard to the ſucceſs of what may be called the next or following crops, that any regard will be beſtowed as to the proper manner of cutting. It is certainly of

much importance, not only for the future vigour, but alſo for the durability of the ſtools, that the ſtems or ſhoots ſhquld be cut in that manner which experience has proved moſt effectual for anſwering both purpoſes. The ſhoots ought to be cut as low as poſſible without injuring the ſtools: When that practice is adopted, the ſtools remain nearly even with the ground, and conſequently in a much better ſtate of preſervation than when by cutting the ſtems at the height of ſix, eight, or ten inches; and this method of cutting frequently repeated, the ſtools get in proceſs of time, as the writer has frequently ſeen, to the height of ſeveral feet above the ſurface ſoil.

Another common error, and which wood-cutters of the above deſcription may be ſuppoſed very guilty of, is to leave the butt-ends of the ſtems jagged and uneven, and part of the bark torn off or looſened all the way down to the ſtool, than which nothing can be more injurious. The butt-end of the ſtems ought rather to be brought to a point in the middle, and the bark remain quite cloſe and firm, otherwiſe dews and rain drop into the hollows, and either rots or otherwiſe proves ruinous to the future health and vigour of the ſtools. In ſhort, to render a coppice both valuable and laſting, a regular ſyſtem of management ought to be adopted. For the reaſons formerly mentioned, they ought to

be thinned two or three times between every general cutting. The uſeleſs bruſhwood ought to be rooted out, and other more uſeful plants ſubſtituted; where too much water abounds, drains ought to be opened; the fences at all times kept in a ſubſtantial ſtate of repair; and on no conſideration whatever ſhould the purchaſers of coppices be allowed to cut down the woods. Men employed by the owners, and who are properly bred to the buſineſs, ought only to be employed; who, by beſtowing proper pains in dreſſing and pruning the butts and ſtools as they go along, would thereby enſure the ſpringing of numerous and vigorous ſhoots the following ſeaſon.

In the ancient woodlands appropriated for the growth of timber, two modes of raiſing young trees are adopted. In ſome woods young oaks are allowed to riſe from the acorns dropt from the trees, and in ſufficient numbers to ſupply the place of thoſe that are from time to time cut down. In others, the woods are reſprung, as it is called, from the ſtools of timber trees formerly cut down. And as this is in the writer's opinion a very profitable mode for the owners, he ſhall endeavour to deſcribe it minutely. When it is intended to reſpring a wood, every tree and ſapling ought to be cut at the ſame time, in order to give all the young ſhoots an equal chance; which they would not have were a number of

ſaplings,

ſaplings, however thriving, left ſtanding, as they would overſhadow the young ſhoots to ſuch a degree as to injure their growth. In felling the wood, the ſame degree of care to the manner of cutting and diſpatch in carrying off is neceſſary, as formerly recommended, as well as attention to putting the fences in proper condition. Theſe woods ſhould be carefully thinned at ſtated intervals: Firſt, within eight or ten years of the cutting; the ſecond ſhould take place about the like diſtance of time; and ſo on during the period the trees are allowed to ſtand, which varies from 30 or 40 to 60 or 70 years, according to the ſoil and ſituation in regard to market. The writer has ſeen ſome woods of this deſcription, which, from the number of trees on the acre, and the height and ſize to which they had arrived, added to the value of the different weedings, muſt have turned out very profitable to the owners, as many of the trees exceeded thirty feet in height and eighteen inches in diameter, a few feet above the ground, while not above thirty-five or thirty-ſix years had elapſed ſince the laſt cutting.

Raiſing large oak-timber fit for the dockyards on private eſtates cannot be conſidered as the moſt profitable ſyſtem of wood management, at leaſt while the commiſſioners of the navy continue to make no difference in price between timber of a very great age and ſize and that which

which is of much ſmaller dimenſions, and conſequently has not occupied the ground for ſuch a length of time. Where oak-trees are allowed ſufficient room for their branches to expand, ſo that each tree will ultimately meaſure from eighty to a hundred feet of timber, fifteen or ſixteen trees will cover an acre. As oak-trees will take from eighty to a hundred years to arrive at the ſize above mentioned in ſoils of ordinary quality, it is evident that the profit ariſing to the proprietor muſt be leſs than what he could derive from ſpring-woods, or from well managed coppice. There are many very judicious obſervations made on this ſubject by the biſhop of Landaff, in the introduction to the Report of the County of Weſtmoreland, and which merits the particular attention of thoſe who are cultivators of oak-timber. "If profit is conſidered (his Lordſhip ſays), every tree ought to be cut down and ſold, when the annual increaſe in value of the tree by its growth is leſs than the annual intereſt of the money it would ſell for.—This being admitted, we have only to inquire into the annual increaſe in the value of oaks of different ages." After various ſtatements, his Lordſhip fixes upon thirty ſhillings each as the price of trees which ſhould be cut down; as, if they be cut before they arrive at that value, or if they be allowed to remain till they will ſell for a much higher price, the proprietor of the ſoil on which

which they grow will be a loſer. He alſo mentions its being the general opinion, that it is more profitable to fell oak-wood at fifty or ſixty years growth, than to let it ſtand for navy timber to eighty or a hundred, owing to the low price that is now paid for oak-trees of large dimenſions either by the Navy Board or the Eaſt India Company. For this reaſon, he recommends the making a much greater than ordinary increaſe of price on timber of a large ſcantling; viz. that in place of four or five pounds per load, if they would give eight or nine pounds per load, for trees containing each one hundred cubic feet and upwards, every man in the kingdom would have a reaſonable motive for letting his timber ſtand till it became of a ſize fit for the uſe of the navy; whereas, according to the preſent eſtabliſhed price, it is every man's intereſt to cut down his trees before they arrive at a proper ſize to be uſeful as navy timber.

The growing of timber and coppice, or underwood jointly, except as ſpring-woods, although not perhaps the moſt profitable mode of occupying woodlands, is in a general view the moſt beneficial; as, beſides providing for the preſent generation, a proper foundation is alſo laid for the ſupply of thoſe that follow. It muſt be admitted, that large timber-trees and underwood cannot be raiſed in a mixed ſtate to as great perfection or advantage as they might be ſeparately.

rately. Oaks, when they have abundance of room, generally ſhoot out large collateral branches, which, extending to a great length all round, prevents any ſpecies of coppice under their influence from thriving or proving uſeful; therefore, in every woodland where large timber is a greater object than the underwood, the laſt muſt ſoon become trifling in quantity and inconſiderable in value, as the ſhade of large trees abounding with foliage will ultimately deſtroy the moſt promiſing coppice. The beſt way of managing woodlands of this deſcription is, to attend rather to a regular ſucceſſion of large trees than to aim at cutting a great number at any one period; when, at every cutting of the underwood, a fall of timber to a ſmall extent only is made, a regular profit may be derived both from the fall of timber and the cutting of the underwood. Under ſuch management, and when equal attention is paid to the proſperity of the underwood as to the timber, a few large trees may be felled every twelve, fifteen, or twenty years, according as the underwood is in the courſe of cutting, and the woodland ſtill go on in a progreſſive ſtate of improvement.

In treating of the more modern plantations, it is not propoſed to take notice of thoſe about gentlemens places of reſidence, which are intended for ornament, but ſuch only as are or may be raiſed on waſte grounds incapable of

being improved or rendered uſeful by cultivation. Of ſuch waſtes there are immenſe tracts in both kingdoms, which are at preſent of little value to the ſtate or to the individual proprietors; but which, by the expenditure of a little money, and by a moderate ſhare of attention, might prove uſeful and profitable to both.

The firſt ſteps to be taken for ſecuring the future proſperity of a plantation is to fence it properly, and, where neceſſary, to drain off the ſuperfluous water. Theſe objects having been accompliſhed, a proper ſelection of plants, according to the various ſoils and ſituations, next demands attention. Oak, aſh, elm, beech, birch, and the whole tribe of firs, particularly larch, Scotch fir, and pineaſter, are the ſorts of trees that, for the purpoſe of planting on waſte lands, moſt particularly merit the planter's regard. The oak, we find from experience, will grow on ſoils of very different qualities; but that in which it thrives beſt is of a ſtrong, deep, firm nature, rather inclining to clay, but free from ſuperabundant moiſture, and in a ſituation moderately ſheltered. The aſh will thrive in very expoſed ſituations; and if the ſoil be deep and free from too much moiſture, its richneſs is not ſo much an object, as aſh will thrive tolerably well in very ſteril ſoils, provided they are of the nature above-mentioned. The Scotch elm, which for waſte lands ought to be preferred to all the other

other ſorts of elm, delights in a free mellow ſoil, rather damp than otherwiſe. The beech prefers a chalky, gravelly, or light loamy ſoil, and will grow in very elevated ſituations where ſuch ſoils abound. The birch of all other trees is the leaſt valuable; but as it thrives in ſoils of very indifferent quality, and in expoſed ſituations, it may be added to the number of foreſt-trees with much propriety. The Scotch fir is proverbially known to thrive in the pooreſt ſoils, and in very elevated ſituations. The larch, although a native of Italy, has been found not only to grow in the climate of this country, but to thrive in almoſt all ſorts of ſoils, and in ſituations ſo expoſed as to render every attempt to raiſe even Scotch fir abortive.

The commiſſioners, appointed to inquire into the ſtate of the royal foreſts, give ſuch an account of the larch-tree, as cannot fail to induce every proprietor, who has any intention of improving ſuch parts of his eſtate as are found incapable of cultivation by planting, to give it a decided preference. They ſtate, that the larch is well known to grow very faſt, notwithſtanding its ſtrength and hardneſs: That it grows higher up on the Alps than any other tree: That it is the natural produce of Ruſſia, a climate colder than that of Great Britain: That in the northern and mountainous parts of Scotland it grows luxuriantly; and, laſtly, that it is the beſt ſubſtitute

for oak, and perhaps equal to any foreign oak produced in the north of Europe. It cannot be conſidered improper, that, following ſo reſpectable authority, the writer, while he recommends the planting of all waſte and otherwiſe unimprovable lands, eſpecially in the lower parts of the country, ſhould alſo recommend the planting a greater number of larch than of any other ſort of trees, as, while he knows it can be done at a comparatively ſmall expence, the returns will be quicker, and the profits of courſe greater.

So much depends on ſoil and ſituation, that to attempt a particular deſcription of the proportions of the various ſorts of trees that ſhould be mixed together in the ſame plantation, under every circumſtance that could occur, would be altogether impracticable.

The planting various ſorts of trees in the ſame incloſure, with a view to timber, has been carried on for a longer period, and to a much greater extent, in Scotland than in England. The lords of manors in the latter kingdom claiming a right to the trees planted by their vaſſals, or thoſe holding by cuſtomary tenure, is an unſurmountable bar to this means of improvement being generally adopted by the copy-holders. He muſt indeed be a patriot who will plant that another may fell; that will ſow when another is to reap. The tithe on timber

ber is alſo a great obſtacle to planting in England; few people will be diſpoſed to expend money in planting waſtes, when they know that the clergyman muſt receive twelve or fifteen *per cent.* of the groſs amount of the ſales, although he contributes nothing to the expence, nor can he receive any benefit from the land while in an unproductive ſtate.

One good conſequence (if it ſhould have been the only one) of the rebellion of 1745, was the introduction of planting in Scotland on a large ſcale. The management of the eſtates, forfeited to the Crown at the cloſe of that rebellion, was veſted in ſeveral public-ſpirited gentlemen, who, fortunately for the country, devoted a conſiderable ſhare of the revenue ariſing from theſe eſtates for the purpoſe of forming plantations. By this means not only a ſpirit for planting was introduced, but theſe plantations prove uſeful to the inhabitants in the neighbourhood, and profitable to the individual proprietors who are now in poſſeſſion of theſe eſtates.

The commiſſioners of the annexed eſtates cauſed plant chiefly Scotch firs, from the idea, it is preſumed, which at that time generally prevailed, that no other ſorts of trees would thrive in ſuch indifferent ſoils, or in ſuch expoſed ſituations, as were under their directions ſelected for the purpoſe of planting. Several of the great proprietors, who have more recently adopted this

this method of improving waſte lands, have alſo planted chiefly Scotch firs, with a view of procuring ſhelter for the more delicate and valuable trees; and when that is obtained, they cauſe thin out the Scotch firs, and plant oak, aſh, elm, larch, &c. in the vacancies.

This, which may now be conſidered the general mode of planting, is, for many reaſons, preferable to a much more expenſive one, that has been with ſome addreſs recently introduced, namely, that of planting a mixture of all ſorts of foreſt-trees at firſt, and ſo cloſe together, that four or five thouſand plants are deemed requiſite for every acre. This method is recommended under the pretence that the work is done at once, and conſequently leſs expenſive than if it were done twice over, as in the former caſe; and alſo that being planted ſo cloſe together, the plants act as a ſcreen to each other, and that the whole will thrive alike.

The nurſerymen, and thoſe who make a trade of contracting to furniſh plants, and to plant waſte ground by the acre, will always find it for their intereſt to impreſs the minds of the proprietors with this idea, in order to ſecure a market for their more valuable plants, which would otherwiſe be required in ſmall numbers only. But it muſt be obvious to every perſon acquainted with the ſubject, that to plant near three thouſand oaks, elms, beech, cheſnut, &c. beſides

larch

larch and Scotch firs, on the acre, can anſwer no other purpoſe than to increaſe the expence of the firſt planting from fifteen or twenty ſhillings to L. 3 or L. 4 the acre; a ſum infinitely greater than the value of the fee-ſimple by the acre of many extenſive tracts, which may be ſeen in ſeveral parts of Scotland planted in the manner now deſcribed.

In expoſed ſituations, where ſhelter is indiſpenſably requiſite, it is no doubt highly proper to plant cloſe; and the more expoſed the ſituation, the cloſer the plants ought to be to each other. At the ſame time, it muſt appear extremely abſurd, that while it is well known larch and Scotch fir will afford the neceſſary degree of ſhelter ſooner than any other trees that can be planted on lands of this deſcription; yet that ſix or eight different ſorts of trees, all more difficult to raiſe from the ſeed, and conſequently the plants more expenſive to purchaſe, ſhould be planted on the acre, ſeemingly for no other reaſon, than becauſe the contractor ſtipulated for ſo many of each ſort. The beſt and by much the leaſt expenſive method of improving waſte ground by planting, is to form the plantation at firſt of Scotch firs, with a conſiderable mixture of larch. When theſe ſhall have arrived at ſuch a ſize as that thinning becomes requiſite, the Scotch firs ſhould on every occaſion be cut out to make way for the larch; and in every part of the plantation

plantation where the ſoil is of ſuperior quality, both ſhould be cut out, and then oak or other trees, ſuch as are adapted to that particular ſoil, may be planted with every chance of ſucceſs. Where the ſoil is generally of a bad quality, the Scotch fir ſhould be occaſionally cut out, and the larch only allowed to ſtand for timber. Were this method more generally adopted, proprietors might plant three acres at leſs expence than one could be planted for where a great variety of plants are uſed, while fewer failures in attempts to improve waſte land by planting would be the conſequence of this prudent management.

One other obſervation on the ſubject of planting the writer begs leave to ſuggeſt, as meriting the conſideration of thoſe public-ſpirited proprietors, who, deſirous to improve that portion of the waſte lands of the country which has fallen to their ſhare, have adopted the reſolution of planting on a large ſcale. The firſt object of every ſuch proprietor ought to be to eſtabliſh a proper nurſery of the various ſorts of trees, ſuitable to the ſoil and ſituation of the lands intended to be planted. This will not only greatly reduce the expence of planting, but tend alſo materially to inſure ſucceſs, as plants habituated to the ſoil and climate have a much better chance of becoming trees than thoſe reared in nurſeries adjoining to cities and towns; where, owing to the more ſheltered ſituation, and the means uſed

to force them rapidly up, they are ſo tender and delicate, that when planted out on a bare bleak expoſed waſte, a great number of them pine for a year or two, and afterwards die. Another advantage ariſing from the intending planter rearing his own plants is, that they are at hand when wanted. In place of ſending, perhaps, ten or twenty miles for a load of young trees, which, when arrived, cannot be all planted for ſeveral days; when the nurſery is on the premiſes no more plants need be taken up in the morning than can be planted in the courſe of the day. In ſhort, whoever intends to improve any conſiderable extent of waſte lands by planting, will do well to eſtabliſh a nurſery of healthy vigorous young trees adapted to the various ſoils which he intends to plant. By uſing this precaution his expence will be extremely moderate compared to what it would otherwiſe be, while the chance of ſucceſs will alſo be infinitely greater.

The beſt methods of planting, pruning, and thinning plantations, are ſo fully detailed in other publications, that it is unneceſſary here to enter on a particular deſcription. The advantages reſulting from improving waſte lands by planting are well known, and very ſenſibly experienced by many individuals in both kingdoms, on whoſe eſtates this mean of improvement was adopted many years ago.

In a general view, it is by planting only that timber can now be provided for the navy, or for carrying on the foreign or domeſtic commerce of the country; and while it increaſes the value of an eſtate very far beyond what it would be were the waſtes allowed to remain unimproved, the independent ſovereignty of the ſtate, conſidering the preſent condition of the royal foreſts, may be ſaid to depend on the exertions of individuals in this reſpect. It has been ſuggeſted, that if the ſpirit for planting were as general in the nation at large as it is in ſome particular diſtricts, the ſtock of timber would in time become too great; but while ſuch negligence prevails in the management of the royal foreſts, proprietors need be under no apprehenſion, that the demand for oak or other timber will be ſo much reduced as to render planting as a mean of improvement to any conſiderable degree leſs profitable than at preſent. On the contrary, while population, commerce, and manufactures continue to increaſe, an increaſed demand for timber muſt neceſſarily take place.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXX.

Waſte Lands and Commons.

THE waſte and commonable lands in theſe kingdoms are of immenſe extent. A great proportion of them no doubt will for ever defy the utmoſt exertions of man to render to any conſiderable degree productive; but that ſeveral millions of acres are ſuſceptible of improvement, either by cultivation or planting, muſt be acknowledged by all who have ever turned their attention to the ſubject. It has been for ſeveral years matter of ſurpriſe, that the executive government of the country, after being in poſſeſſion of the report already mentioned reſpecting the preſent ſtate of the royal foreſts, and of another ſtill more intereſting made by the privy-council, whereby it appears, *that for eighteen years previous to that period the land hitherto cultivated did not produce a ſufficient ſupply of corn for the inhabitants*, ſhould not have turned its attention to the improvement of theſe kingdoms. How

falſe and miſtaken is that ſyſtem of policy by which the chief actors on the national theatre are regulated in their conduct! While expending the blood and treaſure of the nation on the conqueſt of ſuch a barren and inſignificant kingdom as Corſica, or of ſome paltry iſland in the weſtern world, which experience has proved can only be held under a very precarious tenure, they allow their native fields to remain in a waſte and neglected ſtate. But if the want of grain and of oak, "the means of exiſtence and of defence," are not ſufficient to rouſe them into more activity, it is not to be ſuppoſed that any thing the writer can ſay will have that effect. A board of agriculture has, it is true, been recently eſtabliſhed; but the ſum of money aſſigned for the purpoſe of carrying on the operations of that board is ſo truly contemptible (L. 3000 a-year), that were it not the reſpectability of the characters of the gentlemen who compoſe it, nothing could prevent that board, as a national inſtitution, from ſinking into inſignificance. While ſeveral individuals receive ten, fifteen, or twenty thouſand pounds a-year of the public money as officers of the crown, the inhabitants of Great Britain had a title to expect, that on the eſtabliſhment of a board, inſtituted with a view of effecting the agricultural improvement of the country, it would have been put on a more reſpectable footing than any individual,

however meritorious his conduct, or however much his ſervices might be calculated to promote the public good. It will be readily admitted, however, that this board, limited as it is in regard to funds, has already been productive of much good. The agricultural ſtate of the nation has been aſcertained, a ſpirit of inquiry has been ſet afloat, the obſtacles to general improvement have been pointed out, and the Britiſh legiſlature, as well as the Britiſh farmers, are now informed by what means theſe obſtacles can be moſt effectually removed, and how a ſpirit for carrying on improvements can beſt be excited.

THE unproductive lands of Great Britain may be claſſed under three heads; as,

I. The mountainous waſtes incapable of improvement by cultivation or planting.

II. The crown lands.

III. The waſtes and commons in the more fertile parts of the country.

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SECTION I.

The Mountainous Waſtes incapable of Improvement by Cultivation or Planting.

In Wales and in the Highlands of Scotland, as well as in ſeveral counties in England, as Derby, Cornwall, &c. extenſive tracts of waſtes abound, which it would be in vain to think of converting either into arable or wood land. Theſe comparatively unproductive lands might, however, become much more valuable than they are at preſent were better modes of management introduced. In many parts of England particularly theſe waſtes are in a ſtate of common, and very often unſtinted in regard to the number or ſpecies of ſtock, which thoſe having right of paſturage are at liberty to ſend. The abſurdity of this ſyſtem muſt at once appear obvious, as no perſon having intereſt in theſe commons will ever think of adopting ſuch meaſures as are likely to render them more valuable for the only purpoſe to which they can be applied, that of paſturage; while the others, who have equal right, but who beſtow no attention on the object, would derive a great ſhare of the benefit ariſing from the ſpirited exertions of any individual. The legiſlature, by aboliſh-

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ing theſe rights of common, or, which is the ſame thing, by paſſing an act of parliament, by which any proprietor having right of common may, without much expence or trouble, compel the others to a diviſion, would lay the foundation for effecting theſe improvements of which ſuch lands are ſuſceptible.

Notwithſtanding that, owing to the bare expoſed ſituation of many of theſe waſtes, it would be impracticable to improve them by planting, and equally ſo to convert them to tillage; yet means might be adopted, whereby in many caſes the paſture might be ſo much improved, that a greater number of ſheep or other live ſtock, and thoſe ſuperior in ſize and value, might be maintained upon them.

In many of theſe waſtes there is at preſent ſo much ſuperabundant moiſture, and the ſoil is ſo chilled thereby, that the vegetation of graſſes is either greatly retarded or altogether prevented; whereas were a little money and labour beſtowed, abundance of ſweet rich natural graſſes would ſpring up, and ſupplant the courſe benty herbage that abound in all lands of the above deſcription. There is perhaps no one mean of improvement that would in general prove more efficacious for reclaiming waſte lands, and rendering them more productive, than draining. It may indeed be juſtly conſidered as the foundation of all other improvements. In conſtructing

ing the drains, care ſhould be taken to line them off in ſuch directions as to anſwer the double purpoſe of drainage, and of conducting the water to ſuch places where it might be rendered uſeful for the purpoſe of irrigation. Thus, while ſome parts of theſe lands were rendered more fertile by drawing off the ſuperfluous water, others might alſo be improved by having the ſame water conducted over them. Paring and burning might alſo in many inſtances be adopted as a mean of improvement. By paring and burning the heathy ſward of ſuch waſte lands as could be ploughed without an extraordinary expence (eſpecially if lime or marl could be procured), white clover and other graſs ſeeds might be ſown with the greateſt probability of ſucceſs, and that even on ſuch lands as it would be improper to ſow with any ſpecies of grain.

One great ſource of improvement of waſte lands, eſpecially of ſuch as are naturally dry, or that have been made ſo by art, is the dung of the live ſtock that paſture on them; and yet it is almoſt in every inſtance neglected. Sheep are the ſpecies of ſtock beſt adapted for ſuch lands as muſt for ever remain in a great meaſure in the ſtate of nature. The value of ſheep dung as a manure, it was formerly obſerved, is well known in many of the Engliſh counties, where the folding of ſheep is conſidered as the moſt ſubſtantial means of improving the crops both

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of grain and graſs. One thouſand ſheep folded on an acre during one night will, it has been found from experience, drop a ſufficient quantity of dung and urine to manure that acre ſufficiently. As many ſtore farmers in both kingdoms poſſeſs flocks of ſeveral thouſand ſheep, it is evident that they have it in their power, by adopting the practice of folding, to manure in time every acre of a very extenſive farm. The improvement which might by this means be effected is inconceivably great; as, beſides that the paſtures would be much improved in quality, the additional quantity of graſs would be ſo great, as to maintain double, perhaps treble, the number of ſheep. This is an object of ſo great magnitude, both to the proprietors and farmers of ſuch lands, and to the nation at large, as ought to induce thoſe more immediately intereſted to beſtow that attention in effecting it which its importance merits. Were ſuch means as theſe adopted, the number of acres of this deſcription, which could not be improved, would be very ſmall compared with that which, owing to their being allowed to remain in a neglected ſtate, may with too much propriety be termed unproductive.

SECTION II.

The Crown Lands.

THE lands annexed to the crown, together with thoſe belonging to the Prince of Wales, the writer heſitates not to ſay are in general waſte, although capable of the higheſt degree of improvement; that is, if they are not in a ſtate of abſolute waſte, they are at any rate ſo unproductive as to be a reproach to the Britiſh nation.

How theſe lands are diſpoſed of, and the ſhameful exactions made by the leſſees of the crown, may be learned by a peruſal of the following extract from the Report of the County of Hertford: "The honours of Clare and Mandeville extend into Hertfordſhire, Eſſex, Suffolk, Middleſex, and Surry, and ſtill contain a great number of manors and ſeparate parcels of lands, for which ingreſs and alienation fines and quit-rents are payable. Theſe were long neglected, and payments refuſed to the applications of the ſtewards and leſſees of the crown. In conſequence of ſuch refuſals, informations have of late years been filed and proceeded upon in the duchy-court of Lancaſter, and payments thereby inforced. *I underſtand the leſſee is now paid one*

one year with another, between four and five hundred pounds, while his rent to the crown is about ten pounds. The fees and perquiſites of the ſteward are alſo conſiderable. *When he receives a fine or quit-rent of one ſhilling, he charges three ſhillings for a receipt.*"

He muſt be an unconſcionable ſteward indeed, who, for writing a receipt for twelve-pence, has the aſſurance to demand three ſhillings. But ſeveral inſtances might be ſtated where the Ieſſees and ſtewards of the crown-lands act not only as petty tyrants but as extortioners. For if the above is not extortion, it is difficult to ſay under what name it can be called. Theſe practices, although adopted as it were under the authority of the ſovereign of the country, the tenor of whoſe conduct through life has evinced the utmoſt abhorrence of any thing of the kind, are nevertheleſs of ſuch a nature as can affect only the immediate vaſſals or tenants of the crown-lands; and on that account, however improper it may be for courts of law to ſanction ſuch proceedings, cannot be denominated a national evil. But that ſuch do exiſt in conſequence of the crown poſſeſſing landed-property, is well known in every diſtrict where lands ſo held are ſituated. Whether the rents of theſe lands are improved to the ſame degree with thoſe poſſeſſed by private proprietors in the neighbourhood is of no great importance; but

whether the lands are in the higheſt ſtate of improvement of which they are capable, is a queſtion in the ſolution of which every Britiſh ſubject is intereſted. How far this is the caſe may alſo be learned from a peruſal of the above-mentioned Report of Hertfordſhire; where it is ſtated, that "the new foreſt in Hamptonſhire (part of the crown-lands) is alone of great extent; nearly the whole of which is properly tillage land, and bears all over the marks of former occupancy and of the plough. Very little of the timber thereon either is or ever will be fit for the purpoſe of ſhip-building; and it may with juſtice be conſidered a common only to the ſurrounding inhabitants and pariſhes, to the diſtance of fifteen miles and upwards therefrom, who have, in the following manner, acquired a right of common therein: Cottages have been built from time to time in different parts of the foreſt by herdſmen, who look after and tend ſuch cattle as are ſent to them, no matter from whom or whence, at ſo much a head; ſo that the new foreſt is become a common to a conſiderable part of the counties of Hants and Dorſet." Thus, between rabbit-warrens, feeding grounds for the foreſt-officer's hogs, and rights of common paſturage acquired in the manner above-mentioned, that extenſive tract of country, called the New Foreſt, it would appear is *fully*, although *not uſefully*, occupied. So ſhame-

ful a proſtitution of an extenſive tract of improveable land, and at a period too when the inhabitants of the country have been reduced to ſuch difficulties for want of bread, requires no comment. The mind of every perſon in the iſland muſt revolt at the idea of the crown-lands being allowed to remain under ſuch management, while capable, by the ordinary methods of cultivation, of producing an immenſe addition to the general ſtock of bread, corn, and of animal food.

Theſe lands are no doubt conſidered at preſent as unalienable from the crown; but Britiſh acts of parliament are not like the laws by which the Medes and Perſians were governed, unalterable. Were an act of parliament paſſed for the ſale of the crown-lands, together with thoſe in the poſſeſſion of the Prince of Wales, and under ſuch rules and regulations as will be afterwards mentioned, it would give a greater ſpur to the improvement of waſte lands in England than any other meaſure that the legiſlature of the country could adopt. In ſo far as the ſovereign or the heir-apparent are concerned, it can never be an object to retain them annexed to the crown, as neither the preſent nor ſucceeding ſovereigns would experience any material diminution of their revenues on that account. The beſt eſtate which a Britiſh ſovereign can poſſeſs is the hearts of his ſubjects. That is an eſtate, to ſpeak in the farmer's language, that may be improved

mproved (and which the preſent ſovereign has proved to be capable of the higheſt degree of improvement), without the application of fire or water, irrigation or burning, or the uſe of any other extraordinary means. *Nothing is requiſite but to adopt a proper rotation of cropping, to be diligent and attentive to the culture, and careful to extirpate weeds.* Under ſuch management the Britiſh nation will yield ſuch returns as will render the yearly revenue of the ſovereign ſufficiently abundant for every purpoſe to which money can be uſefully applied.

The ſale of the crown-lands would at any time have been a meaſure calculated to promote the intereſt of the country. At the preſent moment it would be particularly ſo, when the inhabitants are groaning under loads of taxes unexampled in any former period; and ſo multiform, and in many inſtances ſo exceſſive, as to prevent the labouring, who are the moſt uſeful part of the community, from enjoying in ſome caſes a ſufficient ſupply of the neceſſaries, and in too many any of the comforts, of life.

Were the crown-lands to be ſold, much caution would be neceſſary in the diſpoſal of them, ſo as to inſure their ſpeedy and permanent improvement.

The commoners, eſpecially the poor people, who have by whatever means acquired rights of common-paſturage, ſhould, in every inſtance, be allowed

allowed property-land in lieu of their common rights; and the arrangements ſhould be made on ſuch liberal principles, that no general murmurings or complainings ſhould be heard. The commiſſioners to be appointed to ſettle theſe common rights ought to conſider themſelves as deciding between a great nation on the one hand, and a poor unſupported individual on the other, and always lean to the weakeſt ſide.

Nor would this be in any material degree againſt the intereſt of the nation; for, in a general point of view, it is of little importance who are the proprietors, provided the lands are properly cultivated; and inſtances are not uncommon, where the poſſeſſor of a few acres carries to market a greater quantity of ſuperabundant produce, or, which is the ſame thing to the nation, maintains a greater number of people at home, than him who poſſeſſes double the extent. Were a compenſation given in property-land in every caſe where common rights are relinquiſhed, the poor people, in place of being obliged to remove, would be induced to build ſmall cottages on their own property; and conſequently much of the clamour againſt a general incloſure bill and the depopulation of the country would be ſuppreſſed. It appears indeed, if not an act of injuſtice at leaſt of inhumanity for commiſſioners, acting under an incloſure bill, to give a poor cottager a compenſation in money for his right

right of commonage, as no ſum that he is likely to receive can be equivalent to a ſmall allotment of land in property, on which, with care and induſtry, he might raiſe crops that would go a great way to maintain a numerous family. When a man ſo ſituated is turned out of his means of providing for himſelf and family, although with a few pounds in his pocket, it is a very great chance, eſpecially during the exiſtence of the abſurd law regarding gaining ſettlements in pariſhes, whether he can ever afterwards be able to ſituate himſelf ſo as that his money may prove materially uſeful to him, or to thoſe in whoſe welfare he is moſt deeply intereſted.

An act of parliament for the ſale of the crown-lands ſhould include a clauſe, either exempting the lands to be ſold altogether from tithes, by giving the clergyman a proportion of the waſte; or the tithes ſhould be ſettled by ſome rule, whereby any unreaſonable exactions on the future induſtry of the purchaſers ſhould be effectually prevented. As the payment of tithes in kind is the greateſt obſtacle to the improvement of Engliſh agriculture, it would be extremely abſurd not to guard againſt any bad conſequences ariſing therefrom in the ſale of lands, which can be rendered productive only by the expenditure of conſiderable ſums, and by the unremitting perſeverance and aſſiduity of the purchaſers.

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Another clauſe, as it would go a great way to enſure the ſpeedy improvement of theſe lands, ſhould alſo be added; namely, that for all lands ſo ſold, that ſhall not be improved by cultivation, planting, or ſuch other means as ſhall have been previouſly aſcertained the beſt that can be adopted, within a certain time, ſeven years, for inſtance, from the period of the ſale, the proprietors ſhould pay a quit-rent of five or ten ſhillings the acre; and that the lands not improved in the manner previouſly agreed upon within the limited time ſhould be ſubject to ſuch payments for ever afterwards.

In order ſtill more effectually to enſure the improvement of theſe lands, they ſhould be erected into freeholds, and ſold in lots from three to five or ſix hundred acres; and no individual ſhould be allowed, under any pretence whatever, to purchaſe more than one lot. The good conſequences of this propoſed regulation are, it is preſumed, obvious. Many ſpeculators in the funds, as well as in the various branches of commerce and manufactures, would, by ſuch a regulation, have it in their power to become independent proprietors, and to expend part of their capitals in the improvement of their native fields, whereby a ſtable foundation would be laid for the future proſperity of the country. In the allotment of theſe lands, the commiſſioners ought to have power to ſtraight and regulate the

marches with the neighbouring proprietors previous to the ſale; and to give off, or exchange by private agreement, a ſpecified number of acres in order to effect this purpoſe, but in no caſe exceeding thirty or forty acres to any one individual. The remainder ought to be diſpoſed of by public auction, ſo that every perſon might have an equal chance. Should any other mode of ſale be adopted, the whole will turn out a job. A few great proprietors in the neighbourhood will become the purchaſers, and the chief object of the ſale will never be attained.

Were ſuch general regulations as theſe adopted, and all manorial and foreſt rights aboliſhed, the crown-lands would produce an immenſe ſum, that might be applied to the exigencies of the ſtate; and, in place of continuing longer a blot on the map of England, and a reproach to every adminiſtration that permits ſuch a great national nuiſance to remain unremoved, a general ſpirit for improvements would be introduced in that kingdom, which would neceſſarily produce in time a very great alteration for the better in the ſtate of the country. An increaſe ſo great would take place in the agricultural productions as would enſure an abundant ſupply of food for the inhabitants, and relieve them from that dependence on foreign nations for bread corn to which they have been ſubjected for upwards of twenty years; and which, owing to the increaſe

of population, ſeems to become every year ſo much more alarming, as to threaten conſequences ſo ſerious in their nature that the writer does not chooſe to mention them.

SECTION III.

The Waſtes and Commons in the more Fertile Parts of the Country.

BESIDES the unimproveable waſtes in the mountainous parts of the country, the crown-lands, and the common paſtures in every open field-pariſh, many of the moſt fertile parts of England are deformed with extenſive waſtes and commons, over which the inhabitants of ſeveral pariſhes have right of commonage. In the counties of Middleſex and Surry alone there are ſome hundred thouſand acres of commonable lands highly ſuſceptible of improvement, and which require nothing but an act of parliament by which they may be converted into private property, and afterwards ordinary cultivation to render them productive. But the moſt extenſive waſte in the iſland of naturally fertile ſoil is parts and portions of the counties of Cambridge, Huntingdon, Northampton, and Lincoln, called the Great Bedford-level, containing upwards of 600,000 acres of ſtrong deep fen-land, which, owing to negligence in regard to drainage, is comparatively waſte. As the improvement of this immenſe tract has been declared by many profeſſional men highly practicable, and as the

the additional produce which it is capable of yielding, not leſs, it is confidently aſſerted, than to the value of a million a-year, the public have a right to expect that the narrow-minded prejudices of a few merchants in ſome particular towns, who, dreading a competition in trade, are anxious to keep things on their preſent footing, and who have intereſt enough with ſome ignorant owners of fen-lands to obtain their aſſiſtance to defeat the meaſures of the more public-ſpirited proprietors, ſhall not continue to have ſo much influence with the legiſlature as to prevent the paſſing of the neceſſary acts of parliament, by which an object of ſo great national importance may be effected. That theſe lands are really capable of improvement, has been demonſtrated in the cleareſt manner, in conſequence of the exertions of two individuals, who procured an act of parliament, by which they were authoriſed to execute a ſmall part of a great plan they had concerted for the general drainage and improvement of the whole. "The work (ſays the writer of the Report of the County of Huntingdon) has been done; and mark the event. The lands in queſtion are improved almoſt beyond belief. They are, in fact, converted from a ſtate of very ſmall profit in moſt caſes, in ſome of none at all, and in others of abſolute loſs to the proprietors, to one of the moſt fertile and moſt productive tracts that can

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be found of the ſame extent within his Majeſty's dominions; while the trade to Wiſbeach (the merchants of which place objected to the drainage), in conſequence of an improved navigation to the ſea, is ſo much increaſed, that the amount of its cuſtoms is more than four times what it had uſed to be."

In the courſe of the writer's ſurvey of the county of Northampton, a tract of fine level land, called the Great Peterborough fen, particularly attracted his attention. It contains ſix or ſeven thouſand acres, equal in quality to any of the ſame extent in the Carſe of Gowrie, and ſuperior both in regard to climate and to markets for the ſale of the ſuperabundant produce. This common is ſubject to the depaſturage of the horſes, cattle, and ſheep of thirty-two pariſhes in the neighbourhood, which compriſe what is called the Soke of Peterborough. Many of the farmers, who reſide in the townſhips immediately adjoining, declared that they did not conſider their right of commonage as of any value. Hence it may be ſuppoſed, that thoſe who live at the diſtance of ten or twelve miles cannot be much benefited from poſſeſſing that privilege. The truth is, conſidering the preſent mode of management, it is impoſſible any advantage can ariſe to the perſons having right of common. At the ſame time, owing to the following circumſtance, it has been proved, that, under proper management,

management, this fen might be rendered a very valuable tract of land. The annual expences of keeping the drains, bridges, &c. in proper repair is conſiderable; and the means adopted by thoſe concerned for raiſing a fund for this purpoſe is, to let a certain number of acres to ſome tenant in the neighbourhood for a courſe of corn-cropping for three or four years. *The rent uſually paid is from three to five pounds per acre.* From this account it is obvious, that were theſe 6000 or 7000 acres converted into private property, divided into proper ſized farms, and let on leaſes of moderate endurance, the whole might be rented at from 20 s. to 30 s. the acre, and the produce become ten times more valuable than it is at preſent.

About ten years ago, the writer had occaſion to perambulate the extenſive and very valuable common of Long Sutton in Lincolnſhire. It was at that time ſwarming with horſes, cattle, ſheep, aſſes, hogs, geeſe, &c. with which it was ſo overſtocked, that thoſe having right of common could only derive, if any, at beſt but a very trifling advantage from exerciſing that right. It has ſince been encloſed, although not without great oppoſition from ſome individuals who viewed their intereſt through a falſe medium. The reſult is what might naturally have been expected: This common, containing about 3000 acres, having been encloſed and converted to tillage, has turned

turned out productive far beyond the calculation even of thoſe who brought forward the bill. All animoſities have ſubſided; the former contending parties now reaping abundant harveſts, as the land produces, in immenſe quantities, corn, hemp, flax, woad, graſs, &c. *

Numerous other inſtances might be mentioned, both of extenſive and, if improved, valuable tracts of land in the more fertile parts of England lying in a waſte and unproductive ſtate; and of others that, having been divided, incloſed, and ſubjected to the plough, have become the moſt productive farms in the diſtricts where they are ſituated. Theſe already ſtated are, however, fully ſufficient to ſhow, on the one hand, the national as well as private advantages that may be derived from purſuing ſuch meaſures as are neceſſary for allowing thoſe who have right to the property to convert theſe waſtes to the moſt valuable purpoſes to which they can be applied, that of raiſing grain and graſs; and on the other, to evince the folly of adhering to ancient laws and regulations, inſtituted during the firſt ſtages of civilization in this country, and during the continuance of the feudal ſyſtem. But this obſtacle to the general improvement of the agriculture of England will be more particularly taken notice of under the proper head.

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* See the Report of the State of Huſbandry in Lincolnſhire.

The only other deſcription of waſte lands are the common paſtures in the open-field pariſhes. The mode in which theſe are occupied was particularly deſcribed in the firſt volume; and the only further remark that falls to be added here is, that while the open-field ſyſtem of huſbandry prevails, it will always be indiſpenſably neceſſary to proſtitute a part of the lands to common paſturage and common meadow, from the tenor of the expreſs or underſtood agreement between all tenants ſo ſituated; or, in other words, to ſacrifice them in a great meaſure to a ſyſtem eſtabliſhed at the original diviſion of landed property in this country; which, however correct it might have been under the then exiſting circumſtances, is acknowledged by all to operate as an unſurmountable bar to the introduction of modern improvements in agriculture.

The waſte lands and commons in England are ſubjects that have attracted the attention of men of knowledge and public ſpirit for many centuries. They have been the theme of numerous publications; in which, however much the writers have differed as to the beſt modes to be adopted, there ſeems to be but one opinion in regard to the propriety and expediency of improving them. Still, however, the executive government has remained inactive; or when by direct application it did interfere, the expence to the parties applying became ſo great as to deter

others from following the example. But as the agricultural ſtate of this nation is now better known than it was at any former period, and as the neceſſity of improving the waſte lands has been very forcibly urged by every individual who has been employed to make reports of the ſtate of agriculture in the different counties it is to be hoped effectual meaſures will at laſt be adopted, in order to enable thoſe who have right to theſe waſtes to uſe the proper means to render them, what many of them are capable of being made, productive. When the legiſlature ſhall remove the obſtacles that bar the way to theſe improvements, the inhabitants of England may, in the words of a provincial writer on huſbandry, look forward with a pleaſing emotion to that day, when the neglected waſtes ſhall have received that degree of improvement of which they are ſuſceptible; when they ſhall wave with valuable crops of corn, bleat with profitable flocks, or be clothed with ſtately timber; and where there may be ſeen in every corner the induſtrious huſbandman at once enriching himſelf, and benefiting the community in a manner the moſt ſubſtantial *.

Truſting that the period is not far diſtant, when the farmers in the diſtricts, where the moſt improveable

* The Report of the State of Agriculture in the County of Weſtmoreland.

improveable of theſe waſtes are ſituated, will have an opportunity of promoting their own intereſt and the public good by engaging in the cultivation of them, the writer ſhall ſubjoin a few obſervations that occur to him, as meriting the attention of thoſe who may be diſpoſed to embark in ſuch undertakings.

It was formerly remarked how much it became the duty of every farmer to conſider well the ſituation of the farm he propoſed to rent, in regard to ſoil, climate, ſituation, as to markets, &c. Theſe conſiderations as naturally fall under the review of the farmer who propoſes to embark his capital in the improvement of waſte land, as of him who is deſirous to rent a farm of old improved land, where no impediments to good cultivation exiſt.

There are obſtructions to the cultivation of waſte lands in general that merit the farmer's moſt ſerious conſideration. Rocks, ſtones, trees, bruſhwood, are ſometimes to be removed, inequalities of ſurface to be levelled, ſuperabundant moiſture to be drained off. The farmer ought alſo to conſider the diſtance from lime, marl, &c.; the means of communication with other places; whether materials for building houſes or erecting fences can be eaſily produced; what is the rate of wages, and the mode in which farm-ſervants and labourers maintain their families. Without a thorough knowledge of theſe

particulars, it is impoſſible for any farmer to determine with preciſion what the yearly rent of hitherto uncultivated lands ought to be; far leſs the expence to which he muſt neceſſarily be ſubjected in improving them.

Although there are many tracts of waſte lands in England that require little more than draining, incloſing, and ordinary culture; yet theſe bear a ſmall proportion to the whole of the waſtes in both kingdoms, which, by exertion, may be brought into tillage with advantage to all concerned; therefore, although it may be in a very few inſtances only where all the obſtructions to cultivation are to be met with on the ſame ſpot of ground, ſome may, however, abound to ſuch a degree as to render it very hazardous for any farmer to come under an obligation to remove them, without not only receiving ſome pecuniary aid from the landlord, but alſo a leaſe of ſuch duration as to afford him ample opportunity of being rewarded towards its cloſe for that expence of money and labour which he muſt unavoidably beſtow at the commencement. In ſhort, there is no arrangement that can take place between a landlord and tenant that ought to be made on more liberal terms on the landlord's part, than that reſpecting the improvement of waſte lands.

After having ſo fully detailed the various means by which lands may be improved by draining,

draining, incloſing, &c. it will not be deemed neceſſary to give particular directions how to proceed in the improvement of waſte lands under every variation of circumſtances that can occur. Such directions, however minutely laid down, would not prove generally uſeful, as no prudent man, that has not been regularly bred to huſbandry, will ever think of undertaking the improvement of extenſive waſtes; and to ſuch as have practiſed huſbandry as a buſineſs, the account of the means of improvement already mentioned, as uſually adopted in theſe kingdoms, will, it is preſumed, appear ſufficiently explicit.

On the ſubject of the beſt means of rendering moſſy ſoils productive, many treatiſes have been written. Theſe, in general, contain more of the theory than the practice of reducing moſs to an improved ſtate of cultivation. The writer has ſeen many attempts made to improve moſs in various parts of Great Britain; but no where with ſo great ſucceſs as in the neighbourhood of Beith in Ayrſhire, where John Smith, Eſq; of Swineridge-moor has devoted his attention for twelve or fifteen years chiefly to that object, and with ſo great advantage as muſt render a detail of his practice extremely intereſting to thoſe who poſſeſs ſuch ſoil, and who, like him, devote their attention to the moſt laudable of all purſuits, that of the improvement of their eſtates; who,

who, agreeing with Swift, "that whoever could make two ears of corn or two blades of grafs to grow upon a fpot of ground where only one grew before, would deferve better of mankind, and do more eſſential ſervice to his country, than the whole race of politicians put together," have reſolved to follow the example of this patriotic gentleman.

The firſt meaſure Mr Smith adopts, in order to render moſs productive, is to lay it ſufficiently dry. This he does by cutting maſter-drains to carry off the ſuperfluous water. Theſe drains (where practicable) he always ſtudies to make in ſuch directions as to divide the fields into ſquare regular incloſures *.

After a field of moſs is freed from ſuperfluous water, the next thing he does is to form it into ridges, which he performs in the following manner: The whole field is firſt marked off into ridges of from ſix to ſeven yards in breadth. In the centre of each ridge a ſpace of about twenty inches is allowed to remain untouched; in each ſide of that ſpace a furrow or trench is opened, and the moſs laid on the untouched ſpace (ſimi-

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* Doctor Anderſon ſome time ago publiſhed a practical treatiſe on peat-moſs, which, although in ſome parts too philoſophical to afford much information to the practical farmer, yet contains many uſeful hints in regard to the proper manner of draining moſs.

lar to the practice of gathering a ridge a ſecond time): the forming of the ridge being thus begun, the work is continued by cutting with a ſpade * about twelve inches in breadth, and as much in length as will keep together, and turning it over in a regular manner towards the crown, ſo as to have the appearance, at a little diſtance, of having been done by a plough. The diviſion furrow between each ridge is made generally about two feet wide; the earth or moſs taken therefrom is thrown upon the ſides of the ridges, or applied to filling up any hollows that may appear in the new formed ridge, or in thoſe immediately adjoining. The depth of the diviſion furrows is regulated by various circumſtances; but the principal object attended to is that of conducting the water to the main drain.

The expence of forming the ridges at firſt, and clearing out the diviſion furrows, coſts about L. 1 : 13 : 4 per Scotch acre. If the ſurface of the moſs in its original ſtate be unequal, particularly if it be greatly ſo, the forming of the ridges coſts about L. 2 per acre.

The ridges being thus formed, the next operation is that of top-dreſſing with lime. The quantity uſed is from three to eight chalders per acre. It is of material importance that the lime be

* It is hardly neceſſary to obſerve, that the whole ridging, harrowing, &c. is done by manual labour.

be laid on the moſs as ſoon as poſſible from the kiln. The lime, after being reduced to powder, is carried to the field by men with hand-barrows made for the purpoſe.

The proper ſeaſon for laying on lime to prepare the moſs for a firſt crop is the preceding ſummer; in that caſe the lime, aided by the ſummer's heat, the rains, and winter froſts, makes conſiderable progreſs on the ſoil in the proceſs of putrefaction before the ſpring, whereby a mould fitted for vegetation is formed.

The field having been prepared in the manner above deſcribed, Mr Smith ſometimes ſows oats in the proper ſeaſon, no matter whether wet or dry, provided the field is free of ſurface water. The ſeed is harrowed in with a ſmall harrow drawn by two men. Four men will harrow at leaſt a Scotch acre and a quarter in a day; two of them draw the harrow by turns, the other two being in the mean time employed with ſpades breaking and dividing the mould. Oats, although ſometimes ſown as a firſt crop, frequently miſgive, and therefore the common practice is to begin with planting potatoes, which has in no inſtance failed; the crops produced being, on an average of ſeveral years, not leſs than ſixty bolls per acre, and the quality excellent. When the moſs is broken up for a crop of potatoes, the ſets are planted in the lazy-bed way; the method of doing which has been already de-

ſcribed. When the potatoes are carried off, the field is formed into proper ridges, and the diviſion furrows cleaned out as a preparation for the ſucceeding crop; the expence is about eighteen ſhillings the acre. When he ſows oats as the firſt crop, in order to prepare the field for a ſecond crop of oats, the furrows of the intended new ridges are cut acroſs the field, and new ridges again formed in the manner before deſcribed, which coſts about L. 1, 6 s. per acre. The preparation for any number of ſucceeding crops of oats (which are ſometimes four or five before laying down to graſs) amounts to about one pound ſterling annually.

The firſt year's crop of oats is ſometimes good, but in general very uncertain, the moſs not being then reduced to proper mould; but the ſecond and following crops run from five to ten bolls per acre. A firſt year's crop of oats after potatoes is ſeldom leſs than nine or ten bolls the acre, and ſometimes above thirteen. Early oats are preferable to all others for yielding a great quantity of grain. The late oats running too much to ſtraw, and lodging at an early period, the grain is frequently but mean in quality and inconſiderable in quantity. Mr Smith generally prepares the ground for the ſecond and following crops as ſoon as convenient after the removal of thoſe that preceded. After a complete firſt liming, five or ſix ſucceſſive crops of oats

are taken without any other manure being applied; and alſo without any apparent ſigns of the ſoil being exhauſted. On the contrary, the moſs in the courſe of a few years becomes a rich dark brown coloured mould; and what alone ſeems to render it leſs productive of oats, is its running into luxuriant ſweet graſſes, as foxtail, white clover, &c.

Along with the fifth or ſixth crop of oats graſs ſeeds (chiefly rye-graſs) is ſown, which in general produces an abundant crop of hay, and afterwards affords excellent paſturage. By this time the moſs may be conſidered as in a permanent ſtate of improvement; and if the fodder raiſed thereon is converted into manure and applied, together with the occaſional aid of lime, it may be made to produce potatoes, grain, and graſs, equal in quantity and quality to that raiſed from any other ſoil where the climate is in any degree ſimilar.

Mr Smith is certainly entitled to great praiſe for having ſet an example ſo ſimple, ſo moderate in point of expence, and at the ſame time ſo efficacious for reclaiming moſs. Within theſe twelve years, he, or rather his tenants under his directions, have reclaimed upwards of a hundred acres, which formerly produced nothing but peats and heath. Within theſe three or four years his neighbours have followed his example, whereby probably four or five hundred acres

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are now rendered both productive and ornamental.

Improvements will no doubt in time be made on Mr Smith's mode of management: that which appears moſt eſſential is to aſcertain correctly the moſt proper ſtate of moiſture which this kind of ſoil ought to poſſeſs, in order to promote the greateſt degree of putrid fermentation by means of the lime applied. With this view Dr Anderſon's plan of draining appears peculiarly worthy of attention, more eſpecially as Mr Smith has repeatedly experienced, that when moſs is laid ſuddenly too dry it becomes peat upon which lime does not act; and, on the other hand, when allowed to remain too wet, the lime does not produce its full effect.

Potatoes as a firſt crop has been found to be by far the beſt and moſt certain method of reclaiming moſs, not perhaps ſo much owing to the dung which is generally applied, as a preparation for that crop aiding the putrid fermentation already begun on the moſs by means of the application of the lime, as to the great aſſiſtance afforded by the potato ſtems covering the ſurface of the ground and cauſing a ſtagnation of air, whereby the exhalation of moiſture is prevented, and the putrefaction or decompoſition of the moſs conſequently greatly promoted.

Such has been the ſucceſs attending Mr Smith's judiciouſly conducted experiments. If

effects ſo beneficial can be produced from due attention to the cultivation of the moſt irreclaimable of all ſoils, what may not be expected to reſult from adopting proper methods for the improvement of others naturally more fertile? When the legiſlature ſhall emancipate the proprietors of England from the thraldom of common rights and foreſt laws; when the proprietors of the North of Scotland ſhall deign to pay attention to the improvement of their eſtates;—we ſhall then behold the cultivation of waſte land as general in every other part of the iſland as it is between the Tweed and the Grampian Mountains, where almoſt every proprietor, free from reſtrictions of any kind, is at liberty to adopt, undiſturbed, ſuch meaſures as appear beſt calculated for the improvement of his eſtate; and where each, vying with the others, is preſſing forward to promote the public good, by the extenſion of tillage and paſture lands, and of woods and plantations.

Were ſuch a ſpirit for the improvement of waſte lands introduced, and become general in the other parts of the iſland, as prevails in the diſtrict of the country above-mentioned, it would be impoſſible to ſet bounds to the future proſperity of theſe kingdoms. While commerce and manufactures would ſtill go on to extend and become more advantageous, the in-

creaſe of population would be rapid in proportion to the additional means of ſupporting it, and all would increaſe in a *ratio* of which at preſent none can form any juſt conception.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXI.

Roads, Markets, Corn-Laws, Weights, and Meaſures.

THE preſent ſtate of the public and parochial roads, the markets for the productions of the ſoil, the effects of the former and exiſting corn-laws on the agriculture of Great Britain, the preſent ſtate of the weights and meaſures, and the advantages that muſt neceſſarily be derived from the eſtabliſhment of one general ſtandard, are ſubjects ſo intimately connected with the deſign of this work, that no apology is requiſite for their introduction.

I. The public and parochial roads.

II. The public markets for the ſale of the produce of the country.

III. Some remarks on the former and exiſting corn-laws.

IV. The importance of eſtabliſhing a uniformity of weights and meaſures.

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SECTION I.

The Public and Parochial Roads.

Good roads, canals, and navigable rivers, Dr Adam Smith very juſtly obſerves, "by diminiſhing the expence of carriage, put the remote parts of the country more nearly upon a level with thoſe in the neighbourhood of the town. They are upon that account the greateſt of all improvements. They encourage the cultivation of the remote, which muſt always be the moſt extenſive circle of the country. They are advantageous even to that part of the country. Though they introduce ſome rival commodities into the old markets, they open many new markets to its produce."

Nothing contributes ſo much to the improvement of a country as good roads. They may, indeed, be conſidered the foundation of all improvement. The military roads through the heretofore inacceſſible parts of the Highlands of Scotland, after the Rebellion 1745, tended more to the civilization of the inhabitants of theſe diſtricts, and to their future peace and ſubordination, than the abolition of the juriſdiction act, or any other meaſure adopted by government. In an agricultural view, the benefits derived from good roads

roads are incalculable. Before the eſtabliſhment of turnpike-roads in England, many parts of that kingdom, like the Highlands of Scotland, were ſcarcely acceſſible. Coal, manure, grain, &c. as is ſtill the caſe in many parts of Cornwall, were carried on horſes backs. Where waggons were uſed, ſeven or eight horſes were neceſſary to draw about two tons, and ſeldom were able to proceed above twenty miles in a day. Now, where turnpikes are eſtabliſhed, or other means uſed for keeping the roads in a proper ſtate of repair, the ſame number of horſes will draw at leaſt five tons, and travel nearly double the diſtance with much more eaſe. How abſurd then for any perſon to ſcruple the payment of an inconſiderable toll, when the ſaving is ſo great and ſo evident; where the tear and wear in the one caſe is not one twentieth part of what it is in the other?

The forming and repairing of public and parochial roads, as it cannot be done without levying an annual tax on the inhabitants of the towns, as well as on thoſe reſident in the country, merits the ſerious attention of the legiſlature. This circumſtance, added to the ſuperior ſafety in which the inhabitants of theſe kingdoms travel when the roads are kept in a proper ſtate of repair, ought to induce thoſe in the management of public affairs to introduce an act of parliament, for the purpoſe of reſcinding the ancient laws reſpecting ſtatute labour, which have

have in every inſtance been found ineffectual, and to eſtabliſh other general rules and regulations more likely to anſwer the purpoſe in the now improved ſtate of the country.

The exiſting acts of parliament reſpecting the making and repairing roads, where the juſtices of peace cannot commute the ſtatute labour, are not ſufficient for the purpoſe of raiſing a fund ſufficient for keeping the roads in repair. Where the juſtices of peace have it in their power to aſſeſs the inhabitants in a ſum of money in lieu of the ſtatute labour, it is in general not the want of means, but the miſapplication of that means, or negligence in the general management, that is the cauſe why the pariſh roads are almoſt every where a diſgrace to the country.

When farmers, cottagers, and others, are called to perform ſtatute labour, perhaps in another pariſh, the work is performed in a careleſs indifferent manner, being conſidered as a legal burden, and which they are no doubt well entitled to do when carried to a diſtance, and compelled to work on roads, in the goodneſs or badneſs of which they feel themſelves in a very ſmall degree intereſted. When the ſtatute labour is appointed to be performed within the pariſh, the period allotted for the purpoſe becomes a kind of holiday-time to the ſervants and labourers; the uſeful labour performed is ſcarcely half, not probably a third, of what it ought to be,

as the parish-officers or overseers, if they attempt to exercise any authority over them, are generally treated with the most sovereign contempt. In either case little benefit can be derived from calling out the inhabitants promiscuously to make or repair roads. Those statutes enforcing the performance of this necessary duty should therefore be abolished; and in every county the justices of peace ought to be invested with the power to assess the inhabitants of the district by some equitable *ratio*, whereby they would pay only in proportion to the benefit they received. Were this generally done, as is the case in several parts of Scotland, the counties divided into districts of such size, that the proprietors could conveniently meet as occasion required; the money arising from the commutation act collected by one person, who should be allowed a certain *per centage* on the sum collected, be continued during good behaviour, and be responsible for his conduct to the gentlemen of the district; the money so collected be afterwards expended under the direction of these gentlemen, and the whole be subject to the review of the quarter-sessions—the parish roads in these kingdoms would soon be materially improved. If to these regulations a power were added to mortgage the sum arising from the commutation of the statute labour for such a number of years, and to such an extent as was found

found neceſſary to put the uſeful private roads in a complete ſtate of repair, they might in a few years be made the reverſe of what they are at preſent. This laſt meaſure would be found the moſt effectual that could poſſibly be adopted, and is probably the only one that can be reſorted to for the purpoſe of effecting an immediate and general improvement.

Conſidering the difficulties that are to be ſurmounted before good roads can be made in any part of Great Britain, it is matter of ſurpriſe that the public roads are not in worſe condition. Where improvements in agriculture have for ſome time been general, the public roads are for the moſt part kept in proper order. Where improved agriculture has been recently introduced, the moſt vigorous exertions are making to amend the roads *; and even in the moſt re-

* The ſpirit of road-making has, within theſe few years, become very general in what may be called the central part of Scotland. The turnpike-roads, and bridges formed within theſe ſeven years, or now forming, or that are in contemplation to be formed, in the counties of Fife, Perth, Angus, Kincardine, and Aberdeen, muſt coſt conſiderably above L. 200,000. The advantages which the inhabitants of that part of the country have derived, or will neceſſarily derive, in conſequence of the expenditure of ſo large a ſum in forming roads and bridges, muſt be very great; ſo great, as it is hoped will be the means of awakening the proprietors of Wales and the North of Scotland to a due ſenſe of the propriety of following ſo laudable an example, and excite them,

mote diſtricts more attention is beſtowed to open roads of communication. The parochial roads in theſe kingdoms are almoſt every where execrably bad. In many parts of England they are narrow lanes, overſhadowed with trees, and full of ſloughs or ruts, permitting, except in particular places, one carriage only to paſs at a time. In the open field parts of England, and generally in Scotland, they are crooked tracts, frequently encumbered with ſtreams or pools of water, and commonly ſo deep and narrow as to be almoſt impaſſable for carriages of any kind during the winter months. In ſome inſtances indeed, the eſtabliſhment of turnpike-roads has had the effect of turning the attention of the proprietors and farmers to the improvement of the pariſh roads, as they found from experience that turnpike roads were comparatively of little advantage, if they were obliged to load their carriages to ſuch a degree only that the horſes could draw them through the ruts and ſloughs in the private or pariſh roads, before they could derive any benefit from the uſe of thoſe on which tolls were payable.

It is abſurd to ſuppoſe that the pariſh roads will ever undergo what may be called a thorough repair,

by making turnpike-roads, to lay that foundation, without which no other permanent or ſubſtantial improvement can be eſtabliſhed in any country.

repair, ſo long as the preſent ſyſtem of management remains eſtabliſhed. While the inhabitants of the ſeveral parts of Scotland are called out to perform ſtatute-labour, under the direction of ſome poor old ſuperannuated being, without judgment or authority, what benefit can be expected to reſult? Or while the inhabitants of a pariſh or townſhip in England are allowed to chooſe an overſeer annually, without a ſalary, from among themſelves, whoſe buſineſs it is to enforce from his relations, friends, and intimate acquaintances the ſtrict performance of a duty which, in all probability, he never diſcharged himſelf, there is no reaſon to hope that much good will enſue. Were an equitable and reaſonable aſſeſſment to be made, the money collected by a perſon appointed for the purpoſe in the manner above-mentioned, and the repairing of the pariſh-roads farmed at ſo much by the year to active and intelligent farmers in the neighbourhood, they would be induced by a ſpirit of emulation and regard for character to perform the neceſſary labour in a ſubſtantial manner. In ſhort, the money raiſed by commutation of the ſtatute-labour, applied in almoſt any way, would go farther in repairing the roads than any exertions, however ſpirited or unremitting, are able to effect by the application of the ſtatute-labour.

In determining on the proper lines of roads,

eſpecially of ſuch as are intended to open a communication with other diſtricts, it is neceſſary to attend to two particulars: Firſt, That the road may be carried through ſuch parts of the diſtrict as will moſt effectually anſwer the intended purpoſe, and without regard to the intereſt of this or that great proprietor; and, ſecondly, That the line ſhould be as level as poſſible from one end to the other. In proportion as deviations are made from theſe, which ought to be conſidered fixed and eſtabliſhed principles, in the ſame proportion will the road be ultimately found leſs beneficial.

In regard to the beſt form of roads, it ſeems generally agreed, that that degree of convexity only is neceſſary which will permit rain water to run gently off. When roads are made flat, or, as in Leiceſterſhire and ſome other diſtricts, concave, rain water will lodge upon them notwithſtanding any precautions that may be uſed to prevent it. On the other hand, when roads are rounded up in the barrel form, which is too often the caſe, the danger of overturning a top-heavy load is greatly increaſed, eſpecially when two carriages ſo loaded paſs each other; as, when the weight of the load reſts upon the wheel or wheels on one ſide, the leaſt obſtruction creates that dangerous equipoiſe, which every intelligent road-maker will make it his ſtudy to prevent the poſſibility of.

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The goodneſs or badneſs of roads muſt depend on the materials that can be procured, and the expence on the diſtance whence theſe materials muſt be carried. As theſe are extremely various in almoſt every diſtrict, it would not conduce to general information to enter into a minute detail of the different methods of making roads, or of the expence by the mile on any given *data*. In one particular reſpecting road-making, there is a too general inattention, which cannot have eſcaped notice. After a road has been put into complete repair, and at a very great expence, the truſtees too frequently conſider any further attention as unneceſſary. In place of employing a few induſtrious ſteady labourers to fill up the ruts, ſhovel off the mud and other reduced materials, during the winter months, and to keep the drains conſtantly in repair, ſo that the rain water may run eaſily and immediately into them; the inſtances are numerous where nothing of this kind is attended to, and where the roads of courſe in a few years revert almoſt to their former ſtate, and can only be rendered uſeful by another thorough repair. Thus a very heavy expence is incurred, which, with ordinary attention on the part of the truſtees or commiſſioners, might have been avoided; and thus another application to parliament and a new rate of tolls are the conſequence.

The meaſures which, on a great national ſcale, appear

appear the beſt calculated to enſure the ſpeedy and ſubſtantial improvement of the public and parochial roads, is to paſs one general act of parliament, empowering the proprietors, who have right to act at the quarter-ſeſſions, to commute the ſtatute-labour for a reaſonable aſſeſſment in money. They ought to have a power alſo of borrowing money on this fund to the extent neceſſary for putting the uſeful parochial roads in each pariſh in proper repair, and a further power of ſhutting up ſuch as are not requiſite; whereby the expence would be greatly leſſened. Were the money to be levied by this alteration of the law to be applied to the repair of the pariſh roads only, and the turnpike-roads to be ſupported by the produce of the tolls, the beneficial effects of ſuch an arrangement would ſoon appear, eſpecially if aided by another, which, while it would prove advantageous to a numerous claſs of men, would tend moſt eſſentially to promote the general improvement of the country; that is, employing the military in making and repairing the roads in times of peace. The immenſe works tending to the improvement of the country, undertaken by the Romans and executed by the ſoldiers, furniſh good hints to the Britiſh legiſlature of the preſent times. The pay of the ſoldiers, if they have families, is inadequate to their comfortable ſubſiſtence. If theſe (in times of peace) uſeleſs men were allowed

ed by the commanding officers, under an act of parliament framed for the purpose, to work on the roads by turns three or four days in a week, to be superintended by the non-commissioned officers, and to receive one half only of the ordinary rate of wages commonly given to day-labourers in the district, their situation would be much improved; they would become more temperate and useful members of society; and their labour, besides procuring themselves the means of subsisting more comfortably, would tend to the good of that public by whom they are maintained in idleness.

Several reasons may be urged, why the roads in so many parts of Great Britain continue in a neglected state. Turnpike-roads have been unpopular among the lower ranks in almost every county in the island where the establishment of them has been attempted. But, on fair investigation, it will, in a great many instances, be found that they do not object to the propriety of the measure, but to the manner in which it is executed, and the evident error in the principle on which tolls are declared by the various acts of parliament to be made payable.

One great complaint of those who are from necessity compelled to walk on foot is, that the turnpike-roads for the greatest part of the year are worse for their purpose, and at no time better, than before any improvements were made.

Every perſon who has paid any attention to turnpike road-making, muſt be ſenſible that this complaint is well founded. The carriages are uſually drawn along the middle of the old roads, and the ſides, which are covered with ſward, and uſually higher than the tract of the carriages, afford a dry clean path, on which the foot paſſenger can walk with eaſe and comfort. Whereas the beſt formed turnpike-roads are lower at the ſides than in the middle, and the whole ſurface ſo covered with mud and filth during the winter months, and to ſuch a depth, that the peaſantry may literally be ſaid to wade along in mire and dirt. This is no exaggerated picture; it is ſtrictly true all over Scotland, as well as in many parts of England, where turnpike-roads are eſtabliſhed.

There is ſomething evidently wrong in the principle of that clauſe, in acts of parliament for eſtabliſhing turnpike-roads, which declares, that for every horſe, mare, or gelding, drawing a cart or other carriage, a certain *and an equal* rate of toll ſhall be paid. This is certainly the reverſe of equity; for if a horſe, who, with his utmoſt exertion, is not able to draw two hundred weight, is liable to the ſame toll with one who with eaſe can drag along ten times the weight, the poor man who is owner of the feeble horſe is taxed for his poverty, as he pays nine times more, according to the benefit he derives, than the man

of

of opulence, who is enabled, in conſequence thereof, to purchaſe a ſtronger horſe. Subjecting farmers to the payment of tolls when their horſes and carts are employed in carrying manure, is alſo a grievance very loudly complained of in many parts of the country. It is certainly extremely impolitic in the legiſlature, when application is made for leave to erect toll-bars by proprietors who are ſo ſhort-ſighted as not to diſcern the propriety of permitting carriages loaded with manure to paſs toll free, to comply with the requeſt; and yet nothing is more common. By this means a diſcouragement is thrown in the way of the induſtrious farmer, and the eſtabliſhment of turnpike-roads is rendered in ſo far of leſs importance.

Theſe are the chief reaſons why the peaſantry and the lower claſs of farmers are inimical to turnpike-roads; and they ought to have weight both with the legiſlature and with thoſe who act as commiſſioners under acts of parliament. Were regulations adopted, whereby commiſſioners in every caſe ſhould be bound to form a foot-path on one ſide of the road, to be covered with gravel or ſome other proper materials, and which would probably in few caſes coſt above L. 20 a mile; that tolls on equitable principles only ſhould be demanded; and that manure ſhould either pay no toll, or only a trifling one—the many would not then be incommoded by the eſtabliſhment

of turnpike-roads for the accommodation of the few, which, under the preſent ſyſtem, is almoſt uniformly the caſe; nor would murmurings and complainings be heard on ſuch occaſions in any part of the iſland.

The attempt to eſtabliſh turnpike-roads not only gives riſe to complaints from the lower and middle ranks, who are generally thereby ſubjected to real grievances, but alſo to much altercation and wrangling at quarter-ſeſſions and county meetings among thoſe people (the proprietors of the country) who, of all others, are moſt deeply intereſted in the ſucceſs of the meaſure. What a pity that gentlemen do not think of ſacrificing on ſome occaſions private intereſt for public good! That becauſe the propoſed line of road is not to take that direction which would to the greateſt poſſible degree benefit their particular eſtates, they ſhould uſe their rhetoric and influence to prevent the eſtabliſhment of this moſt eſſential mean of improvement! Yet how often has the writer heard orations delivered at county meetings in Scotland againſt the introduction of toll-bars, which, if they contained not as much ſolid argument, were at leaſt as long and as declamatory as any that Demoſthenes ever delivered? This remark is as applicable to the proprietors of England as to thoſe in Scotland. The very intelligent writer of the Report of the State of Agriculture in the Coun-

ty of Hereford makes ſome very ſenſible obſervations on the ſubject, and in the following words; "It frequently happens that the horrible demon of diſcord ſallies forth on theſe occaſions. If the great man, who generally takes the lead in laying out the turnpike-road, has no immediate intereſt himſelf, he has often a friend to oblige or an enemy to mortify. In the courſe of pretty long experience, I have very rarely ſeen a great man take it into his head to ruin a turnpike-road, who did not ſucceed in the face not only of reaſon, but of facts reducible to mathematical demonſtration. Pride, more than intereſt, often influences the conduct on ſuch occaſions. A majority of votes at a turnpike meeting keeps up the ſpirit of the party, and ſerves to intimidate the enemy. The ſame party-ſpirit is ſometimes viſible in paſſing the road by the commiſſioners after it has been made. If the contractor be of the ſame party, three or four inches of gravel will do in place of twelve, to which his contract bound him; but if he gave his vote with the weak party, *woe be to him!*"

The notoriety of theſe facts is unqueſtionable; and the evil reſulting from them is found to be ſo inſufferable, that in many parts of the kingdom they are making the roads a ſecond time for many miles in a ſtretch, and thereby loading the public with the annual payment of the intereſt of double the ſum that was really requiſite, had

had the roads been laid out properly at firſt. Whoever will take the trouble of adding up the ſums paid by the public annually at the different gates in this iſland, will be ſtruck with the immenſity of the ſum total *. Every miſapplication of the money expended in making the turnpike-roads, through ignorance or worſe motives, becomes an injury to that public who are bound to pay the intereſt of it; yet it ſomehow moſt unaccountably happens, that the government or legiſlature of theſe kingdoms have hitherto taken no more notice of the miſapplication of this portion of the public property, than if they had not been intereſted in the public proſperity.

If to theſe obſtacles to making good roads be added the demands made by the clerks of parliament, on any application for leave to improve a particular diſtrict of country by making commodious roads, and as a neceſſary conſequence to erect toll-bars, it is no wonder that many people are deterred from making or joining in ſuch applications. It is highly proper that public meaſures, ſuch as incloſing pariſhes, making roads, building bridges, and forming navigable canals, ſhould have the ſanction of the legiſlature; but nothing ſurely can be more improper, than that the officers of parliament ſhould have it in their power to bar the way to all improvement, unleſs they ſhall get four or five hundred pounds for informing the legiſlature, that an application has been

* It is ſaid to be upwards of L. 500,000.

been made for leave to incloſe a pariſh, with a view of rendering the lands more productive; to make a road that would open a communication to a remote part of the country; to build a bridge acroſs a river, in which, for want of that means of conveyance, many of his majeſty's ſubjects had loſt their lives; or to form a navigable canal, by which proviſions and fuel, the two moſt indiſpenſable articles of life, could be procured at lower prices and in greater abundance: yet for this, and for attending to their duty (recording the decrees of parliament), theſe exactions are made, and muſt be complied with. Suppoſe one application only made from each county in the year, and that L. 400 is the medium charge for paſſing ſuch acts of parliament (and neither of theſe ſtatements will be found beyond the fact), the ſum annually drawn from the lieges in this way would amount to L. 34,000 a-year. Whether theſe charges are arbitrary, or fixed by ſome eſtabliſhed rule, the writer has no acceſs to know; but that ſuch charges operate againſt the general improvement of the country, is a well known fact, and ought on that account to be aboliſhed.

The only other means of communication and conveyance neceſſary to be taken notice of is navigable rivers and canals. The canals already completed or forming have had wonderful effects upon the agriculture, as well as upon the manufactures

manufactures and general ſtate, of many parts of Great Britain. Theſe and the navigable rivers render the carriage of bulky articles more eaſy and leſs expenſive. The conveyance of manure, fuel, &c. into diſtricts, whither, without that medium, they could ſcarcely have been tranſmitted, has tended materially to the improvement of theſe particular diſtricts; and the eaſe with which the inhabitants can export the produce of the country to otherwiſe almoſt inacceſſible markets, while it tends to the ſame end, has alſo conſiderable effects on the general markets of the kingdom, and leſſens the number of horſes that would be requiſite for exporting theſe articles from one place to another.

In paſſing acts of parliament for making canals, and deepening the beds of rivers ſo as to render them navigable, it would materially promote the public intereſt were the legiſlature to examine, with the moſt ſcrupulous exactneſs, the beſt means to be adopted, in order to prevent the deepening of this river, or the forming of that canal, from affecting the agricultural proſperity of the particular diſtricts. Owing to ſome cauſe or other, inland navigations in many parts of England have proved ruinous to the adjoining lands; while in many others the injury done to the ſoil in the diſtricts through which theſe inland navigations are carried, by obſtructing the free paſſage of the rivers to the ſea, and by

by their frequently overflowing their banks; and deſtroying the crops in the low grounds, is infinitely greater than any commercial advantages that can poſſibly be derived from them, except by thoſe who are more immediately intereſted. To render canals, or inland navigations of any ſort, of general utility, much circumſpection is neceſſary in framing the acts of parliament, ſo that, while the commerce of the country is increaſed, its agriculture may not be injured. It might be a wiſe regulation, that, in every inſtance without exception, all ſorts of manure ſhould be carried at one half or one third of lockage dues, made payable for articles of any other deſcription. Were this attended to, and minute inveſtigation made as to the probable conſequences that were likely to reſult from granting leave to form canals, and deepen the beds of rivers, for the purpoſe of inland navigations, theſe means of leſſening the expence of carriage would not ſo often prove injurious to the beſt intereſt of the country,—its agricultural improvement.

SECTION II.

The Public Markets for the Sale of the Produce of the Country.

It was formerly obſerved, how much it became the duty of every farmer, before renting a farm, to aſcertain its ſituation in regard to markets for the ſale of agricultural productions. The markets in the more fertile and populous parts of Great Britain are in general good, and by means of turnpike-roads, inland navigations, and ſea-carriage, eaſy of acceſs; but were the regulations propoſed to be adopted by government reſpecting the ſale of grain eſtabliſhed, and one general ſtandard for weights and meaſures fixed upon, they would be ſtill more improved. Far different, however, is the ſtate of the markets in the remote parts of both kingdoms; and while the proprietors of theſe diſtricts remain ſo inattentive to their own intereſts, it is not probable that any material alteration will take place for the better. The loſs and inconvenience which the farmers in Wales and the Highlands of Scotland are often ſubjected to, by being obliged to diſpoſe of their cattle on credit, has been particularly mentioned; and the

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proper remedy, which requires only a little exertion of a few proprietors in particular diſtricts to apply with effect, has alſo been pointed out. In theſe diſtricts, the cultivators of grain are as ill ſituated, in regard to markets, for the ſale of the produce of their farms as thoſe who keep breeding ſtocks of cattle and of ſheep. The effects of the want of markets, as deſcribed in the Agricultural Report of Pembroke, applies almoſt to the whole of Wales, and to every part of Scotland north of the Grampian Mountains: "The number of inhabitants, who live by handicraft buſineſs, or who buy their proviſions, is but ſmall in proportion to thoſe employed in agriculture; which occaſions the demand for corn and butcher-meat in our markets to be ſmall. Hence thoſe who grow a large quantity of corn find a great difficulty in ſelling it. We have corn-dealers at the ports, who purchaſe corn during the autumn and winter months, at a price always much below what is ſold at the ſame time in the open markets. When wheat is ſix ſhillings the buſhel in the market, the dealers will hardly give five, and other grain in proportion. The reaſons for this difference between the dealer's price and the market price are theſe: He buys with a deſign to export his corn to Briſtol, or ſome other Engliſh port; he muſt take care in buying to provide for ſtore-houſe rent, porterage, freight, inſurance by ſea, commiſſion

on ſales at the port he ſends it to, and, laſtly, for his own trouble and capital employed. Beſides all theſe expences, he runs another material riſk: Our corn is generally ſo damp, that it will not keep in the lofts without being laid thin, and turned at leaſt once a-week. If, in going to a port, a veſſel meets with contrary winds, and is delayed on her voyage, the cargo frequently heats to ſuch a degree as to reduce its price below prime coſt, and then the dealers ſuffer a great loſs by the venture."

From this account of the ſtate of the markets in the remote parts of Great Britain, may be inferred the advantages which the proprietors of ſuch diſtricts would derive by eſtabliſhing manufactures, whereby markets would be brought home, as it were, to every farm. Where that cannot be effected, inland navigations, where practicable, as being infinitely preferable to turnpike-roads for the carriage of corn to market, and for bringing manures in return, ought to become the next object of the proprietors attention. By theſe the poſſeſſors of diſtant corn farms are often put nearly on a footing with thoſe in the more immediate neighbourhood of the beſt markets in the country. But it may frequently happen, that it would be impracticable to eſtabliſh extenſive manufactures, ſuch as would have the effect of creating a market for the ſurplus-produce of a diſtrict, and phyſically impoſſible

impoſſible to form canals, ſo as to open a communication with otherwiſe diſtant markets: In ſuch caſes, good level well made roads is the only alternative. Theſe, although an expenſive mode of conveyance, are highly beneficial, particularly in inland diſtricts remote from markets, and where it is impoſſible to form canals. Corn and meal are frequently carried in very great quantities from the ſouthern counties of Scotland to the Edinburgh and Glaſgow markets, which, without turnpike-roads, would ſcarcely be practicable, at leaſt the expence to the farmers would be ſo great as to amount almoſt to a prohibition; and would neceſſarily compel them to turn their attention to the breeding and grazing, rather than the tillage ſyſtem of huſbandry, which, under ſuch circumſtances, would certainly turn out the moſt profitable.

How much the ſituation of a farm, in regard to markets, ought to influence both proprietors and tenants in making choice of one particular rotation or mode of cropping in preference to another, has already been ſtated. Where no exertions can approximate markets to a farm, which would otherwiſe be well adapted to the cultivation of grain, breeding and grazing cattle or other ſpecies of live ſtock is the beſt method in which ſuch farm can be occupied. Theſe, if not ſold in the diſtrict, can be carried to diſtant markets almoſt without roads, and at a comparatively

comparatively trifling expence. Were the markets for the ſale of cattle in the north of Scotland and in Wales as well regulated as in the other parts of Great Britain, the moſt beneficial conſequences would enſue, as, except in theſe diſtricts, ſcarcely any improvement can be ſuggeſted. The dealers in cattle, reſiding in the various diſtricts of Scotland, except thoſe in the ſouth and ſouth-weſt, generally move their cattle ſouthward at two ſeaſons, Auguſt and October; at which periods, what may be called the two great national markets for the ſale of black-cattle are held at Falkirk in Stirlingſhire. There it is not uncommon to ſee 30 or 40,000 black cattle exhibited for ſale in one day. Theſe being either purchaſed by dealers from England, or by ſome of the principal people in that line in Scotland, are thence driven forward to markets in England. Probably nineteen out of twenty of the Scotch cattle enter England by the way of Carliſle; and matters are ſo contrived, that there are cattle-fairs, one ſucceeding another at proper intervals, during the whole courſe of the journey from Carliſle to the ſouthern parts of Surry. From Carliſle to the ſouthern parts of Yorkſhire the droves are conducted along the ſame line of road. They are then branched off from the great London road in different directions; ſome going through the eaſtern parts of the country towards Norfolk,

folk, Suffolk, and Eſſex; and the remainder through the weſtern part of Nottingham, Leiceſter, Northampton, Buckingham, &c.; and ſuch as are not ſold in the diſtricts above-mentioned are ſent to Barnet in Middleſex as a centre, and are there expoſed to ſale. When any of them remain unſold after Barnet fair, which, owing to a combination of unfavourable circumſtances, ſometimes happens, they are ſent forward to markets in Surry, Dorſet, &c. which alſo ſucceed each other in the manner before-mentioned. From this arrangement, were the farmers in the remote diſtricts to receive ready money for their cattle when ſold, it is preſumeable, that from the competition which generally takes place among the dealers at the provincial fairs, they would receive a fair adequate price, conſidering the riſk of lameneſs or death, bad ſales, and the great expence attending driving cattle to ſuch diſtant markets.

While every perſon will agree, that the regulation of the public markets of the country falls naturally and properly under the direction of the legiſlature, yet it is believed, there are none who believes that, during an impending ſcarcity in this iſland, it is either a prudent meaſure, or one likely to alleviate the evil, that the ſervants of the crown ſhould become the national importers. Whoever has thought coolly and diſpaſſionately on the ſubject, muſt be ſatisfied that the

the alarm founded by the privy-council laſt year reſpecting the proſpect of ſcarcity, and the meaſures afterwards adopted by the firſt Lord of the Treaſury in his character of corn-merchant, tended in no ſmall degree, in place of alleviating, to increaſe the evil. In conſequence of the failure of the harveſt of 1788 in France, M. Neckar, the then firſt miniſter of ſtate, was the firſt perſon that became alarmed on the ſubject. Various orders of council were iſſued from time to time, as circumſtances occurred or ſeemed to render neceſſary; at laſt, the executive government, *in place of encouraging merchants to import grain, became itſelf the importer of grain.* What was the reſult? All the merchants ſtood ſtill, —mercantile ſpeculation was at an end,—the evil increaſed,—riots, commotions, and exceſſes of every kind, ſucceeded; and beſides the dreadful cataſtrophe to which that ſcarcity tended to give riſe, M. Neckar himſelf informs us, that upwards of three millions Sterling of the public treaſure were loſt in theſe ſpeculations. With ſuch a recent and awful example before its eyes, it is aſtoniſhing that the executive government of this country ſhould have trod in the ſame ſteps. Riots, tumults, bloodſhed, and murder, were common in many parts of this iſland for ſome months; and would in all probability have greatly increaſed, had not the Britiſh parliament wiſely adopted the reſolution of allowing the

the ſpeculative genius of the Britiſh merchants to exert itſelf, by forbidding the executive government from further interference. What has been the conſequence? Plenty has flowed in from every quarter; while it is too evident, that had the firſt miniſter of ſtate been permitted to follow out his ill-concerted ſcheme, the moſt dreadful conſequences would have followed, and the waſte of public treaſure would have been immenſe. Independent of the bounty paid to the merchants on the importation of grain, the actual loſs to the nation, in conſequence of his commencing the buſineſs of a corn-merchant, is probably much greater, were the accounts fairly balanced, than what the French nation ſuſtained from the individual ſpeculations of M. Neckar. This appears the more likely, as, after parliament prohibited Mr Pitt from any longer carrying on the trade of *a national corn-merchant*, bounties were paid to the importers of foreign grain exceeding L. 490,000. Theſe circumſtances naturally lead to a conſideration of the former and exiſting corn-laws.

SECTION III.

Some Remarks on the Former and Exiſting Corn-Laws.

On this intereſting ſubject much might be ſaid, were it proper to enter into a minute detail of particulars. It was not till after the revolution that a bounty on corn was firſt adopted, as a meaſure calculated to promote the general intereſt and improvement of the country. That this regulation had the deſired effect is an unqueſtionable fact, that may be at any time aſcertained by an examination of the public records. From the period when the bounty was firſt granted till the year 1757, when the former corn-laws were firſt altered and partly ſuſpended, the quantity of grain exported gradually increaſed every year, and at laſt became a very conſiderable article of Britiſh commerce.

It appears from the cuſtomhouſe books, that in 50 years, from 1698 till 1748, there were *eight millions four hundred and thirty ſix thouſand nine hundred and ſixty-two and a half quarters of wheat exported;* beſides four times that quantity of malt, barley, rye, and oatmeal*.

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* See Muſeum Ruſticum, vol. ii. p. 291.

The rapid improvement that took place in the agriculture of the country, and in the extenſion of tillage lands, in conſequence of the then exiſting corn-laws, evince the correctneſs of the principle on which they were founded, however deficient they might have been in ſome particulars; for, during the firſt thirty-five years of the period above-mentioned, the quantity of wheat exported was only - qrs. 4,083,247 0 buſh.
Whereas, during the laſt fifteen years, there were exported - 4,353,715 4

qrs. 8,436,962 4 buſh.

So that the exports of the laſt fifteen years exceeded that of the preceding thirty-five no leſs than two hundred and ſeventy thouſand four hundred and ſixty-eight quarters and four buſhels.

From the year 1757, when ſeveral material alterations were made in the corn-laws, till the year 1773, when the principle on which the original corn-laws were eſtabliſhed was in a great meaſure abandoned, the export of grain gradually became leſs; and from the laſt mentioned period till 1793, that is, for twenty years, the balance was turned againſt Great Britain to the extent of four hundred and thirty thouſand one hundred and fifty-ſeven quarters *per annum* *.

 This

* See Dirom's Enquiry into the Corn-Laws and Corn-Trade of Great Britain.

The immenſe difference in the above ſtatements may be partly accounted for from the increaſe of population, without attending to the extenſion of tillage lands in the ſame proportion, but is chiefly owing to the corn-laws, enacted ſince 1757, having been framed particularly for the purpoſe of promoting the manufacturing intereſt; whereas thoſe originally eſtabliſhed went on the broad principle of promoting the general proſperity of the country, by a deviation from which a large annual importation in ordinary years is rendered indiſpenſably neceſſary for the very exiſtence of the inhabitants. "The corn-laws of Great Britain (ſays a late writer), as they at preſent ſtand, are extremely inadequate for the purpoſes intended by them. The principle of them, if any conſiſtent principle can be fairly recogniſed, is erroneous. As they at preſent ſtand, they neither are, nor have been, nor can be, executed. They are calculated to give riſe to jobs, chicanery, and frauds innumerable. They unneceſſarily interrupt the internal commerce of grain, ſo as to diſtreſs the people and depreſs the agriculture of the nation. Under the pretext of attempting to lower the price of corn, they really enhance it beyond what it ought to have been, and give occaſion for the interference of government in innumerable caſes, where that interference

interference can only prove hurtful to the people at large *."

It is owing to an ill judged partiality to the manufacturing intereſt beyond that of thoſe concerned in the cultivation of the ſoil, that the balance of the corn-trade has been allowed to turn ſo much againſt Great Britain; and unleſs a very material alteration takes place in the arrangement of the corn-laws, that balance will every year become more conſiderable, and the moſt ſerious conſequences may be expected to enſue. If the principle on which the corn-laws are founded be right, why not extend it to the favourite object of every miniſter of ſtate in this country during the preſent century? "If it be a good principle, that the exportation of a commodity be reſtrained, that our people at home may have it cheaper, ſtick to that principle and go through with it. Prohibit the exportation of your cloth, your leather and ſhoes, your iron-ware, and your manufactures of all ſorts, in order to make them cheaper at home; and cheap enough they will become till people leave off making them †." Let us apply this reaſoning to the queſtion before us. The opening of foreign markets for grain induced the farmers, who, as well as the manufacturers, are always attentive to their own intereſt,

* Anderſon's Eſſays on Rural Affairs.

† See Scots Farmer, vol i. p. 252.

intereſt, like them to exert every endeavour to ſupply the demand. They increaſed the extent of tillage-lands, as the ports of Europe opened to their view; ſo that while plenty reigned in the land, foreign nations were maintained on the ſuperabundance of our crops. Mark the contraſt. The various corn-laws that have been enacted in latter times having all in a greater or leſs degree one object only in view, that of furniſhing the manufacturers with bread at a price that gave them an undue advantage over the farmers; and it being neceſſary to ſhut the ports of Europe againſt the farmers, in order to effect this object, they very prudently turned their attention to the bringing forward ſuch articles to market as, if there happens to be a ſuperabundance, they know the manufacturers will be permitted, after receiving their ſhare of the profit, to export, as woollen cloth, leather, ſalted proviſions, &c. For this change of ſyſtem, under the exiſting circumſtances, although having a direct tendency to increaſe the evil, are the farmers of Great Britain to be blamed? Certainly not. If the legiſlature ſhut out the farmers from the ſale of their grain at foreign markets, except under rules and regulations, and on ſuch terms as amount almoſt to a prohibition, who can cenſure them? If, ſeeing the cultivation of grain a loſing concern, from their being under orders as to the mode of ſale, as well as reſtricted in a great meaſure

meaſure as to price, they embark in another undertaking, viz. the rearing and fattening live ſtock, the ſurplus of which, through the medium of the more favoured claſſes of Britiſh ſubjects, the merchants and manufacturers, they know can be exported in one ſhape or other to any part of the globe, are they not right?

Doctor Adam Smith, in his Enquiry into the Cauſes of the Wealth of Nations, gives a number of reaſons whence to conclude that corn-laws of any deſcription are unneceſſary, if not improper. This, however reſpectable the authority above quoted, the writer is ſatisfied would be going too far, as, if the corn-trade were carried on without regulations or reſtrictions of any kind, the moſt baneful conſequences would enſue. But if, in place of that conſtant ſhuffling and changing, that endleſs cutting and carving on the corn-laws of this country, which has taken place ſince the year 1757, one thoroughly digeſted and deliberately framed act of parliament, on the original principle of making Britiſh corn an article of foreign commerce, were to be paſſed, thoſe concerned in huſbandry would find it more for their intereſt to devote their attention to the cultivation of grain than under the exiſting circumſtances they do; and of courſe ſuch an act of parliament would have the effect to render corn not only abundant, but, when compared with other

other articles, moderate in price. If ever it ſhall become the ruling principle to guard alike the intereſts of the farmer, the merchant, and the manufacturer, plenty will again viſit the land. We ſhall, beſides being enabled to throw off our dependence on foreign nations for an annual ſupply of bread-corn, have it in our power, by our exports, to draw back from theſe nations the immenſe ſums which, owing to the impolicy of the corn-laws, we have been obliged to expend. But till regulations reſpecting the ſale and export of grain, as liberal as thoſe which regard the manufacturing and commercial concerns of the country, are enacted into ſtatutes, and the farmer be left as unfettered as the merchant or the manufacturer, neither of theſe events can be expected to happen.

The public newſpapers have for ſome time teemed with the moſt ſevere and generally unjuſt reflections againſt the Britiſh farmers, on account of the late high prices of grain. A letter, which was written by a gentleman well known in the literary world, and publiſhed in the London Chronicle in 1766, when the farmers of that day ſuffered ſimilar abuſe, and were (as happened laſt year) plundered in many places, is the beſt anſwer that can be given to ſuch unmerited abuſe. This letter, ſome extracts from which are here ſubjoined, is addreſſed to

Meſſieurs the Public *.

" I am one of that claſs of people that feeds you all, and at preſent is abuſed by you all:—In ſhort, I am a farmer.

" By your newſpapers we are told, that God had ſent a very ſhort harveſt to ſome other countries of Europe. I thought that might be in favour of Old England; and that now we ſhould get a good price for our grain, which would bring millions among us, and make us flow in money, which to be ſure is ſcarce enough.

" But the wiſdom of government forbade the exportation.—Well, ſays I, we muſt be content with the market price at home.

" No, ſays my lords the mob, you ſha'n't have that. Bring your corn to market if you dare.—We'll ſell it for you for leſs money, or take it for nothing.

" Being thus attacked by both ends of the conſtitution, the head and the tail of government, what am I to do? Muſt I keep my corn in the barn to feed and increaſe the breed of rats? Be it ſo;—they cannot be leſs thankful than thoſe I have been uſed to feed. Are we farmers the only people to be grudged the profits of honeſt labour? And why!—one of the late ſcribblers againſt us gives a bill of fare of the proviſions at

* Muſeum Ruſticum, vol. i. p. 254.

my daughter's wedding, and proclaims to all the world that we had the insolence to eat beef and pudding. Has he not read that precept in the good book, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn? or does he think us less worthy of good living than our oxen?

"Oh! but the manufacturers! they are to be favoured, and they must have bread at a cheap rate!

"Hark ye! the farmers live splendidly, you say; and pray would you have them hoard the money they get? Their fine clothes and furniture, do they make them themselves, or for one another, and so keep the money among them? or do they employ these your darling manufacturers, and so scatter it again all over the nation?

"My wool would produce me a better price if it were suffered to go to foreign markets; but that, messieurs the public, your laws will not permit. It must be kept all at home, that our dear manufacturers may have it the cheaper; and then having yourselves thus lessened our encouragement for rearing sheep, you curse us for the scarcity of mutton."

It might have been added, By the impolicy of your corn-laws, you shut us out from a market for our superabundant grain, while at the same time you abuse us for not cultivating it to a greater extent.

SECTION IV.

The Importance of Uniformity in Weights and Meaſures.

THE variation in the weights and meaſures of every production of the ſoil, while thoſe by which the various articles of commerce and manufactures are in almoſt every inſtance regulated by general ſtandards throughout the iſland, is one evidence, among many others that might be adduced, how much attention has hitherto been beſtowed by government in every particular connected with commerce or manufactures, while the intereſts of agriculture have been allowed to ſhift for themſelves. There is, perhaps, no greater grievance under which the whole nation ſuffers, and that might be ſo eaſily remedied, as the diſconformity of weights and meaſures. It is not a ſingle county or diſtrict where this evil exiſts; every pariſh, nay, where the rents are paid in grain or meal, almoſt every eſtate, differs from others in theſe eſſential particulars: the conſequence is uncertainty and wrangling in bargain-making, which frequently terminates in law-ſuits, and ſubjects individuals to many evil conſequences.

The writer of the Report of the County of Stafford holds probably the moſt ſingular opinion on this ſubject of any perſon in Great Britain. He ſtates, "that the cuſtom of Wolverhampton market is eighteen ounces to the pound of butter, one hundred and twenty pounds to the hundred of cheeſe, nine gallons and a half to the buſhel of barley, oats, beans, and peaſe, and ſeventy-two pounds to the buſhel of wheat, *while that of other markets in the county varies, ſome being more and ſome leſs.*" And then adds, "much complaint has been made about a regulation of weights and meaſures, and obliging every perſon to ſell by the ſtatute or ſtandard weight or meaſure; *but I cannot think it a matter of much importance.*" If there be ten or twenty different and indefinite meaſures uſed for the delivery of the ſame ſpecies of grain in a ſingle county, and this is not uncommon in Scotland, is it of no importance to the proprietors, farmers, and corn-merchants, that they ſhould be put upon an equality? If the pound of butter be in one market ſixteen ounces, in another eighteen, in a third twenty-two, in a fourth twenty-ſix, and in a fifth twenty-eight, and the writer knows markets where all theſe various ſtandards are eſtabliſhed, is it of no conſequence that one general ſtandard ſhould ſupply the place of ſo many? On this ſubject it is however unneceſſary to enlarge, as the legiſlature of the country

country has at laſt turned its attention to the ſubject. The bill now depending before parliament for the ſale of grain by weight will, when put in practice, evince the propriety of adopting the ſame regulation in regard to articles of leſs importance. A bill to regulate the police of the public markets, added to one or more for eſtabliſhing general ſtandards of weights and meaſures, would be attended with the moſt ſalutary effects; and if the clauſes in that bill were ſtrictly enforced by the magiſtrates of the different towns, or by thoſe acting under their authority, which is at preſent too generally neglected, every man would be compelled to act an honeſt part, and the poor would not be oppreſſed. Sometimes we hear that a ſurvey has been made of the weights uſed by the bakers in particular towns, and that ſome frauds have been detected. Are the bakers the only deſcription of people in this iſland that uſe falſe balances, or weights under the legal ſtandard? That it is proper for the magiſtrates to ſuperintend this branch of police, no perſon will deny; but why the weights and meaſures of every individual who undertakes to ſerve the public ſhould not be as ſtrictly and as often examined as thoſe of one particular claſs, it may be difficult to account. The bakers, it is true, are more frequently detected than other ſhopkeepers; but might it not be found, were equal attention beſtowed, that they act upon the

the whole as honeſtly as the butcher, the mealman, or the grocer? In ſhort, the magiſtrates of a town, who do not pay proper attention to the adjuſtment of the weights and meaſures uſed by the inhabitants in public ſituations, do not perform their duty, and are unworthy of the ſituations which they hold.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXII.

Obſtacles to further Improvements in Agriculture, and the means by which theſe may be moſt effectually removed.

THE attentive reader, before he can have proceeded thus far, muſt be ſatisfied that Britiſh Agriculture has not arrived at that degree of perfection to which it may be brought; and that various obſtacles, which now impede the way to further improvement, muſt be removed, before any material alteration can take place in that reſpect. It ſhall be the writer's buſineſs in this chapter to point out what theſe obſtacles are, the means by which they may be moſt effectually removed, and how much it is the indiſpenſable duty of the legiſlature of theſe kingdoms to follow the advice of the poet:

" ——— Let us cut off theſe legal bars
Which cruſh the culture of our fruitful iſle:
Our waſtes would then with varied produce ſmile,
And *Britain* ſoon a ſecond Eden prove."

Were

Were this desirable event to take place, were the legislature to turn its attention to this object, the most important to which it can be devoted, the alteration of such laws as bar the way to agricultural improvements, "our wastes would then indeed with varied produce smile," and the British nation advance to a greater height of splendour and prosperity than it can ever otherwise attain. Then would the extension of our tillage-lands, and the number of our herds and flocks, keep pace with our commerce and our manufactures, "and *Britain* soon a second Eden prove."

The obstacles that prevent the further improvement of the British territory are various, and many of them so complicated in their nature as, it must be admitted, will render it very difficult to effect new arrangements, whereby they may be removed, and all the parties interested in the arrangement completely satisfied. But in all national questions, the interest of individuals ought to bend to that of the public, otherwise no general improvement can ever be effected. In treating of this subject, it may be proper to consider the obstacles that impede the agricultural improvements of Great Britain separately; as,

I. The payment of tithes in kind.

II. The poor's laws and poor's rates.

III. Cus-

III. Cuſtomary tenures.

IV. The improper management of the crown-lands.

V. Church-lands.

VI. Lands held under deeds of entail.

VII. Commons and commonable rights.

VIII. Open-field lands.

IX. Thirlage to mills.

X. The game-laws.

XI. Obſtacles in the power of proprietors to remove.

SECTION I.

The Payment of Tithes in Kind.

Of all the obſtacles to the improvement of agriculture in England, there is none that excites ſuch univerſal diſguſt, that is conſidered ſo great a grievance, or that is productive of ſo many evil conſequences either in a political or a religious view, as the payment of tithes in kind. This oppreſſive and ruinous ſyſtem has, as will be found in the ſequel, been long aboliſhed in Scotland; and which, added to two or three other ſalutary regulations that were long ſince eſtabliſhed in that kingdom regarding landed property, and which will be afterwards taken notice of, has tended to excite that ſuperior ſpirit for undertaking agricultural improvements, which is ſo evident beyond what is obſervable among the proprietors and farmers in England.

The tithe (in Scotland *teind*) may be defined that proportion of our rents and goods which is due to the clergy for performing divine ſervice, and exerciſing the other functions proper to their ſeveral offices. We are taught by natural as well as revealed religion, that a part of our ſubſtance is due for the ſupport and maintenance

of

of the worſhip of God, and that thoſe who ſerve at the altar ought to live by the altar; but whether a ſpecial proportion of a tenth of our yearly revenue is due to the clergy by divine and unalterable right, is a point that has been agitated with great heat *. It is well known, that under the Jewiſh government tithes were directed to be paid by divine appointment. "Under the Moſaic diſpenſation (ſays Biſhop Butler), God himſelf aſſigned to the prieſts and Levites tithes and other poſſeſſions, and in theſe poſſeſſions they had a divine right; a property quite ſuperior to all human laws, eccleſiaſtical as well as civil. But every donation to the Chriſtian church is a human donation, and no more; and therefore cannot give a divine right, but ſuch a right only as muſt be ſubject, in common with all other property, to the regulation of human laws."

Whether the claim to tithes on the principle of divine right remains ſtill eſtabliſhed in the Roman Catholic countries, the writer does not know; but this ſort of claim to tithes has long ſince ceaſed in this country. The conduct of Henry VIII. of England and of Charles I. of Scotland furniſh indubitable proofs of their holding a different opinion; as theſe kings, on the abolition of Popery, in place of transferring

* See Erſkine's Inſtitutes of the Law of Scotland.

the tithes from the Roman Catholic clergy to their ſucceſſors in office, aſſumed the right of granting the greateſt part of them to the nobility and great laymen of the time, and in Scotland, in particular, with the burden only of reaſonable ſtipends to the Proteſtant clergy. The grants of tithes made by theſe kings and their ſucceſſors having been either directly or indirectly ratified by parliament, are now to all intents and purpoſes the property of the ſucceſſors of theſe original grantees.

Tithes appear to have been common in all ages. The firſt Chriſtian emperor Conſtantine the Great was very liberal to the church; and, in the year 321, publiſhed an edict, granting his ſubjects full liberty to bequeath any extent of property they choſe to the clergy *. This, however, in place of proving that a tenth of the produce was payable to the clergy in the early ages of Chriſtianity, proves the direct contrary; —that the clergy, in place of having any legal right to tithes, were ſupported by charitable or gratuitous donations, and not by aſſeſſments made either under divine or human laws.

Monteſquieu, in his Spirit of Laws, takes notice of the period when the payment of tithes was legally eſtabliſhed. He ſays, "No one queſtions

* Gibbon's Hiſtory of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.

queſtions but the clergy opened the Bible before Charlemagne's time, and preached the gifts and offerings of the Leviticus. But, I dare ſay, before that prince's reign, though the tithes might have been preached up, they were never eſtabliſhed."

Gibbon, in his Hiſtory of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, not only mentions the period when the payment of tithes was eſtabliſhed by law, but alſo aſſigns the reaſon in the following words: "The ſynod of Frankfort, held under Charlemagne in the year 794, furniſhed a cogent motive to pay the tithes. A capitulary (ſtatute) was made in that ſynod; wherein it is ſaid, that in the laſt famine the ears of corn were found to contain no ſeed, the infernal ſpirits having devoured it all; and that thoſe ſpirits had been heard to reproach the people with not having paid tithes: in conſequence of which it was ordained, that all thoſe who were ſeiſed of church-lands ſhould pay the tithes; and the next conſequence was, the obligation extended to all."

Having thus ſtated ſhortly the origin of tithes, let us next inquire to what uſes they were applied after the clergy acquired a legal right to demand them, and how far the clergy of the preſent day follow out in practice that principle upon which they were originally made payable. But, previouſly to this inquiry, it may not be amiſs

amiſs to give one ſpecimen at leaſt of the artifices reſorted to by the Engliſh clergy to enforce payment of tithes, before the laws of the country had acquired a greater hold of mens minds than the bigotry of the Romiſh church. During the reign of Henry VI. which took place in the fifteenth century, the biſhops and ſuperior clergy framed what they called a penetential, which the prieſts were directed to uſe in auricular confeſſion; and which was as follows: "Haſt thou paid the tithings and offerings to holy church? Thou art to underſtand, that at the beginning of the world Adam was directed to give to God the tenth part of every thing; and God bade him teach his children to do the ſame. Adam had two ſons, Cain and Abel. Abel tithed truly, and of the beſt; Cain tithed falſely, and of the worſt. At laſt the falſe tither, Cain, ſlew Abel his brother; becauſe Abel blamed Cain, and ſaid he tithed falſely: wherefore God curſed Cain and all the earth. *So you now ſee that falſe tithing was the cauſe of the firſt manſlaughter that ever was, and it was the cauſe why God curſed the earth* *."

By ſuch fabrications as this did the Romiſh clergy in theſe kingdoms enforce the payment of tithes and other exactions; and while they lived voluptuouſly, and were in the habit of committing

* Seldon's Hiſtory of Tithes.

ting every ſpecies of debauchery, we are told by the famous Wickliffe that the poor periſhed with hunger, thirſt, and cold.

In regard to the queſtion, Whether the tithes in England are now appropriated to the uſes for which they were at firſt paid, whether voluntarily or by compulſion?—it will be neceſſary to go back to the firſt introduction of the tithing ſyſtem in that country. Bede ſtates, that about the year 597 Gregory the Great, then Pope, ſent a monk of the name of Auſtin into England to propagate the goſpel, and to introduce a ſyſtem of church-government among the people. Auſtin having ſucceeded to the utmoſt of his wiſhes, and having received a grant of land from the then king of Kent, beſides donations from private individuals for the ſupport of himſelf and the prieſts whom he had brought along with him, he found it neceſſary to apply to the Pope for directions in regard to the manner in which theſe royal and private donations ſhould be applied. Gregory ſolved the monk's queſtion, by replying, that it was the cuſtom of the church to divide ſuch voluntary gifts as Chriſtians were pleaſed to beſtow into four parts. To give one to the biſhop, another to the inferior clergy, a third to the poor, and to ſet aſide the fourth for erecting and upholding churches or places of worſhip.

In confirmation of this, Blackſtone in his

Commentaries remarks, that "at the firſt eſtabliſhment of parochial clergy the tithes of the pariſh were diſtributed in a fourfold diviſion; one for the uſe of the biſhop, another for maintaining the fabric of the church, a third for the poor, and the fourth to provide for the incumbent; and when the ſees of the biſhops became otherwiſe amply endowed, the biſhops were prohibited from demanding their uſual ſhare of theſe tithes, and the diviſion was in three parts only."

The ſame author, treating of the ſtate of tithes in the fourteenth century, takes notice of an act of Richard II. enjoining the biſhops to allocate a proper ſum out of the tithes of each dioceſe for the ſuſtenance of poor pariſhioners; and adds, "it ſeems the people were frequently ſufferers by withholding of thoſe alms for which, among other purpoſes, the payment of tithes was originally impoſed."

At what period the ſuperior clergy of England firſt poſſeſſed themſelves of the tithes, in defiance of the original deſtination, and of many ſtatutes made to enforce an application of them to the uſes for which they were firſt made payable, it is unneceſſary to inquire. It will not be denied by the keeneſt ſtickler for the prerogatives of the church, that in place of one third of them being applied for the uſe of the officiating clergy, one third for the ſupport of the poor, and

and the other third for the repairs of the churches, which, when the biſhops had acquired land in mortmain, or free alms, ſufficient to ſupport their dignity, was the deſtination originally intended. The tithes payable in England are now very differently, although not ſo legally, appropriated. Thoſe people who are moſt diſpoſed to cry out, "The church is in danger!" when the real or ſuppoſed rights of the clergy are invaded by the ſlighteſt attempt to alienate the tithes, ought to reflect that the third of all the tithes in England, whether in poſſeſſion of the church or of the laity, ought to be allowed for the ſupport of the poor; that another third ought to be expended in the repairs of churches, the expence of which is now defrayed in almoſt every inſtance by an aſſeſſment on the pariſhioners; and that the other third ought to fall to the officiating clergymen, many of whom are the moſt miſerable of the ſons of men! For who can ſuppoſe that a claſſical ſcholar, with perhaps a wife and a numerous family of children, can feel the leaſt ray of comfort dart upon his mind, when doomed to exiſt on the ſcanty pittance of L. 20 or L. 30 a-year? But this by the bye; for it is not intended to cenſure the preſent members of the church of England for alienations of rights that took place centuries ago, far leſs to inſinuate that that reſpectable body have not an unqueſ-

tionable right to the value of ſuch a proportion of the produce of the ſoil as will enable them to fill the ſtations in which they are placed with dignity and honour. The writer's object is, to confine himſelf to a ſuccinct account of the particulars in which the payment of tithes in kind operates againſt the introduction of improvements in agriculture and the advancement of religion; and, by deſcribing the manner in which the alteration in the tithing ſyſtem was brought about in Scotland, endeavour to point out a way in which the future payment of tithes in England may be arranged ſo as moſt effectually to promote the intereſts of agriculture, without, in the ſmalleſt degree, infringing the rights of the individuals concerned in paying or receiving them.

Various are the ways in which the payment of tithes in kind operate againſt the general proſperity of England. In reſpect to the farmers, it is unfortunate, although certainly the caſe, that the payment of tithes in kind operates more againſt the ſpirited improver than againſt the ſlovenly and indolent. Tithes, as the law now ſtands, cannot be conſidered ſo much the tenth of the natural produce of the ſoil as a tenth of the capital employed by the farmer in its cultivation and improvement. For inſtance, if a farmer pays his ploughman

ploughman ten pounds a-year of wages, his labourer ten pence a day for his labour, or the landlord a hundred pounds of rent, he muſt conſider himſelf as advancing one tenth part of theſe ſums for the purpoſe of promoting the intereſt of the tithe-owner, who not only receives annually a ſum equivalent to the tenth part of this capital, but that tenth part improved to the higheſt degree which the unremitting exertion of the tenant is able to affect. Mr Locke, in his Treatiſe on Civil Government, ſays, "It is labour which puts the greateſt part of the value upon land, without which it would ſcarcely be worth any thing. It is to that we owe the greateſt part of all its uſeful products; for all that the produce of an acre of wheat is more worth than the produce of an acre of as good land which lies waſte is the effect of labour." Hence the farmer not only furniſhes a fund to purchaſe the neceſſary labour, whereby an acre of land is rendered ſo productive, as to afford ſix, or eight, or ten ſhillings *per annum* of clear revenue to the tithe-owner, which, but for the application of that labour, would have remained unproductive for ever, in ſo far at leaſt as he was concerned. So much is this the caſe, that if a farmer expends one hundred pounds on the purchaſe of manure, the improvement and cultivation of his farm, and the payment of rent, and if the value of the crop, when ſold, amounts to

one hundred and ten pounds, he is actually a loſer to the extent of five pounds, or what may be the intereſt of L. 100 for a year. He, indeed, gets his capital of L. 100 returned, but the tithe-owner draws the ten pounds or rather more, or, which is the ſame thing, the value; ſo that the farmer has employed his capital to enable the tithe-owner to draw a dividend of ten *per cent.* on that capital: whereas had he lent it on mortgage, or placed it in the funds, he would have benefited himſelf and his family to the extent of the intereſt or the dividend which he, in either of theſe caſes, would have himſelf received.

So much for the abſurdity of attempting to improve lands under ſuch circumſtances. There is another grievance to which farmers are ſubjected in the payment of tithes in kind ariſing from the harſh and oppreſſive manner in which the payments are exacted. The nature and extent of this grievance may be learned by a peruſal of the following extract from the writer's Report of Northamptonſhire, where it is ſtated, that "it has happened, though, to the credit of the tithe-owners be it ſaid, the inſtances are very rare, where, when the tithes have been let for the purpoſe of oppreſſion, the tithing man has been known to exert that authority with which he was inveſted; and has not only taken the tenth ſhock of corn and the tenth cole of hay,

hay, but alſo the tenth lamb, pig, hen, egg, &c.; nay, has even gone into the garden, and taken not only the tenth part of the fruit, but alſo the tenth of the produce of the kitchen-garden. Under ſuch circumſtances as theſe, it may be aſked, who is the farmer that would not feel himſelf aggrieved?" From this it muſt appear obvious, that whether the farmer's intereſt or happineſs be conſidered, it muſt be equally his deſire, that ſome arrangement ſhould be effected, whereby the payment of tithes in kind ſhould be for ever abolished; for, as the writer of the Report of the County of Buckingham very juſtly obſerves, "it may be laid down as a propoſition, that whatever profit ariſes to the cultivator of the ſoil, by the force of ſuperior ingenuity and induſtry, ſhould be held ſacred by the church and government. If it be otherwiſe, it diſcourages the improvement of the ſoil; and thereby the church prevents the future increaſe of her tithes, and the government the future increaſe of its taxes." If the payment of tithes in kind operates againſt the intereſt and happineſs of the farmers, the ſyſtem will be found productive of equally diſagreeable conſequences, if regard be had to the intereſts of religion and the clergy. It will be found to diſturb the harmony of ſociety, and to be often the means of creating ſuch diviſions between the clergyman and his pariſhioners as renders the religious inſtructions

of the former of little avail*. While, in a political view, it is injurious, as tending to looſen that chain of intercourſe and connection which it is conſidered of ſo much importance, eſpecially in ſuch *eventful times*, to keep united. The intereſt of the clergy would alſo be greatly promoted, were they to receive an equitable compenſation for their tithes, in place of drawing them in kind, or of making annual arrangements with the farmers. It is the lay proprietors that are moſt blameable in reſpect to the rigorous

* Many inſtances might be mentioned of the teaſing and vexatious circumſtances that occur to diſturb the harmony that ought to ſubſiſt between the clergyman and his pariſhioners. The following, extracted from the Report of Hampſhire, ſhall ſuffice: "The clergyman and the farmer were at variance; and the farmer, determined to be even with the clergyman, gave him notice that he was going to draw a field of turnips on a certain day. The clergyman accordingly ſent his team and ſervant at the time appointed, when the farmer drew ten turnips, and deſired the other to take one of them; ſaying, he ſhould not draw any more that day, but would let him know when he did." This, among many other inſtances, proves how deſirable it would be to have ſome plan adopted to prevent theſe evils, and thereby remove the cauſe for complaint in the occupier, and at the ſame time render the lives of the clergy much more peaceable and happy. What a noiſe muſt the pulling of theſe ten turnips have made in the pariſh, and how little calculated was ſuch a meaſure to promote the intereſts of religion or the happineſs of the pariſhioners?

rigorous manner in which the tithes are collected. Clergymen, who act up to the character in which they ſtand in the ſcale of ſociety (and the moſt violent declaimer againſt them will not pretend that a very great majority of that reſpectable body do not ſo) very generally ſacrifice ſo great a portion of their juſt demands for the ſake of peace and quiet, that, if the expence of collecting be added, there is ſcarcely any compoſition that can be propoſed which it would not be for their intereſt to accept. Some inſtances there no doubt are, where the clergyman, being of a turbulent avaricious diſpoſition, lays hold of every advantage, and collects his tithes to the value of the uttermoſt farthing: but it ought to be remembered, that a clergyman who does ſo, nay, that a clergyman who ſubmits to the drudgery of collecting tithes in kind, muſt loſe, in the opinion of his pariſhioners, a great ſhare of that reſpectability of character which it is his indiſpenſable duty to ſupport. If the payment of tithes in kind operates againſt the intereſt of the farmers and the clergy, it does ſo in an equal degree, although in different ways, againſt that of the landholder and the public. In proportion as the ſpirit of agricultural improvement is checked the landholder muſt ſuffer; and as there are none of the laws exiſting in England that prove ſo great an impediment to the introduction of better modes of huſbandry as thoſe enforcing

enforcing the payment of tithes in kind, of courſe there are none that operate ſo powerfully againſt the landed intereſt. If the farmer is reſtrained from encloſing, draining, purchaſing manure, in a word, from improving and cultivating his farm to the higheſt degree, who will deny that the proprietor's intereſt ſuffers? And that that is the caſe in numerous inſtances, in conſequence of the operation of the tithe-laws, every man in the leaſt acquainted with the preſent ſtate of Engliſh agriculture muſt admit. The public comes in for its ſhare of the loſs ariſing from the effect which the tithe-laws have on the huſbandry of the country, as, by their operation, the quantity of corn that might be cultivated, did no ſuch laws exiſt, is diminiſhed to an immenſe degree. Beſides, they check induſtry, by depreſſing the farmer's ſpirit, and by preventing the circulation of money that would be expended in improvements and in the purchaſe of the manufactures of the country. Were no ſuch laws in force, the proprietors and farmers, in conſequence of the ſucceſs of the improvements which in that event would be undertaken, would be enabled to purchaſe more of the manufactures of the country, pay a greater ſhare of taxes for the ſupport of the ſtate, and after all live in greater eaſe and comfort than under the exiſting circumſtances they are able to do. In ſhort, the abolition of theſe laws

ſeems

ſeems the only meaſure that can be adopted with any probability of ſucceſs, at leaſt the one that ought firſt to be attended to, with a view of again bringing the corn-trade to turn once more in favour of this country.

When all theſe various circumſtances are conjoined, and when it is further conſidered that, except in Spain and Portugal, there is ſcarcely a civilized nation in the world where this ſyſtem of church-ſlavery is allowed to exiſt, and that even in Ruſſia tithes are aboliſhed, it may be reaſonably hoped the period is not far diſtant when England, the otherwiſe moſt favoured of all the nations, will be relieved by legal and conſtitutional means, and in conſequence of arrangements made on liberal principles, from this almoſt Egyptian bondage.

It appears, from the accounts given by ſeveral writers on the ſubject of tithes, that they were paid in the latter ages of the Romiſh church with great reluctance. *That virtuous and conſiſtent* monarch Henry VIII. a few months before he diſpoſſeſſed the monks of the monaſteries and ſeized the revenues, paſſed an act of parliament, the preamble of which bears: "That divers numbers of evil diſpoſed perſons, having no reſpect to their duties to Almighty God, had attempted to ſubtract and to withhold in ſome places the whole, and in ſome places great part, of their tithes and oblations, as well perſonal as

predial (tithes of corn, hay, and other produce of the ſoil), due unto God and holy-church; and purſuing ſuch their deteſtable enormities and injuries, had attempted to diſobey the eccleſiaſtical courts."

If, when improvements in agriculture were in their infancy, and at a period too when mens minds were held in ſlaviſh ſervitude by the clergy, the payment of tithes in kind could hardly be enforced, can it be ſuppoſed wonderful, that in theſe enlightened days it ſhould be conſidered as a grievance? At a period when the principles of religion and of real genuine liberty are better aſcertained, and more generally known, than in any former age, it is not ſurpriſing that laws compelling the payment of tithes in kind, laws which originated in edicts iſſued by bigotted kings under the influence of deſigning prieſts, ſhould now be found inimical to the beſt intereſts of the country, and to the happineſs of ſo many thouſands. That this is the caſe, every inhabitant of this iſland has ample opportunities of ſatisfying himſelf, by a peruſal of the Reports of the different Counties in England and Wales, as publiſhed under the direction of the Board of Agriculture. If theſe reports, after having been circulated among the proprietors and farmers in that kingdom for their correction and amendment, ſhall contain, when republiſhed, the ſame or ſimilar complaints

regarding the hardſhips which the farmers are ſubjected to, and the injury which agriculture ſuſtains, by the payment of tithes in kind, as doubtleſs they will, theſe complaints may juſtly be deemed the voice of the people proclaimed in a conſtitutional way; and as ſuch merits the moſt ſerious and ſpeedy attention of the legiſlature and of the clergy.

The various hardſhips ſuſtained by the poſſeſſors of lands ſubject to the payment of tithes in kind are ſtated in theſe reports to the Board of Agriculture with a degree of temperance and candour that entitle them to particular regard. The ſecretary to that Board, in his Annals of Agriculture, delivers his opinion on the ſubject with great heat and unbecoming violence. After ſtating the high rate of tithes payable on a particular farm, he ſays, "If ſuch enormous tithes as are here ſtated have no effect on the nerves of the good people of England, nothing will. Some of my correſpondents have wiſhed to be put *in this reſpect* on the footing of our neighbours the French; and in truth well they may. If ſomething is not done to eaſe this pinching point, a conteſt will be raiſed by and bye in this kingdom hot enough to have dreadful effects. It is the faſhion of the period in England to GRANT *nothing*; the conſequence of which may be, *all* will be TAKEN *."

* Annals of Agriculture for July 1790, vol. xiv. p. 9.

In his monthly publication for May 1791, Mr Young, when commenting on two clauſes of an act of parliament that had been recently paſſed for encloſing a particular pariſh (the one regarding the compenſation to be given to the rector in lieu of tithes, and the other regarding manorial rights), thus delivers his ſentiments: "But let the people at large convince themſelves, that they live in a country in which a great and general abuſe is leſs likely to be remedied than in any other country of Europe; and this groſs evil ariſes even from the merits of our government; it is theſe merits which furniſh the wretched arguments ſo common againſt all innovation. Becauſe our conſtitution was good on compariſon with thoſe of our neighbours, therefore the groſſeſt and moſt horrible oppreſſions are voluntarily to be ſubmitted to; becauſe to remedy them would be to innovate! Our properties are to be ſo devoured by taxes (divided among thoſe who vote them), as, in effect, to reduce whole claſſes of the people to poverty; and we are to be left groaning under the ſlavery of tithes, after they have ceaſed through half Europe; becauſe any change in the conſtitution of parliament or the church would be dangerous. But thoſe who are taxed fifty *per cent.* of their income, may ſurely aſk, what epithet is to be given to ſuch payments? Whether ſuch are exempt from danger; or rather,

ther, if they are not the conſummation of that evil, of which *danger* expreſſes only the apprehenſion?

"It behoves the government of this country to take warning in time. The progreſs of liberty is rapid and epidemical; it has effected revolutions in Ireland, America, and France: the very terror of the moment has confirmed the freedom of the Netherlands. The oppreſſion of tithes has been almoſt ſwept out of Europe. The period advances with celerity when the people of England will be brought to ſay with one voice, WE WILL NOT PAY THEM."

In the concluſion of the ſame paper he makes the following remark: "I have inſerted the manorial clauſe only to ſhow, that while the French have had ſenſe and vigour enough to annihilate every ſpecies of feudal tyranny, the Parliament of England, in every incloſure act, recognizes and confirms it." *

But——"May no ſuch ſtorm
Fall on our times, where ruin muſt reform."

No! although a reform in the mode of paying tithes in England muſt be admitted by every impartial perſon as indiſpenſably neceſſary, yet were the legiſlature to devote that attention to the ſubject which its importance demands, and the clergy

* Annals of Agriculture Vol. xv. p. 577, &c.

clergy to come forward with reaſonable propoſitions for an adjuſtment of tithes, the matter might, and no doubt will, be ſettled to the ſatisfaction of all parties.

With a view of leading the reader's attention to the mode which appears beſt calculated to remove this greateſt of all obſtacles to the improvement of Engliſh huſbandry, it will be neceſſary to take under view the preſent arrangement of the tithes in Scotland, and the circumſtances that led to that arrangement.

The payment of tithes in kind, Mr Erſkine, in his Inſtitutes of the Law of Scotland, obſerves, was continued for many ages in that kingdom; and, owing to the precarioufneſs of the climate, was attended with more grievous hardſhips than could have taken place in the ſouthern part of the Iſland. Every Scotch proprietor or farmer who preſumed, after reaping their corns, to carry off any part of them from the field till the perſon having right to the tithe had drawn his ſhare, were, from the firſt eſtabliſhment of this right, ſubjected to ſevere penalties. The tithe-owner, on the other hand, either from indolence, a deſire to oppreſs, or with a view of compelling the proprietor or farmer to purchaſe his tithes annually at a high price, frequently delayed drawing his ſhare till great part of the crop was rotten. Notwithſtanding ſeveral ſtatutes were enacted with a view of checking the oppreſſive

preſſive diſpoſition which ſo often evinced itſelf in the conduct of the clergy in this reſpect, yet theſe grievances continued to exiſt, more or leſs, till the year 1633; when a decree-arbitral, paſſed by Charles I. in 1629, for arranging and determining a mode, to be afterwards adopted, for the payment of tithes, was ratified by Parliament.

During the ſtruggle for the eſtabliſhment of this or that form of church government, great alterations had taken place, both in regard to thoſe having right to the tithes, as well as in the manner in which they were exacted. On the Reformation, the benefices of the church fell to the crown, and were, at different periods, gifted for ſervices, or other conſiderations; ſuch as, for ſupporting univerſities, hoſpitals, &c. And the perſons obtaining them were denominated Lords of Erection, and ſometimes Titulars of the Tithes. They alſo got, or aſſumed, the right of nominating officiating clergy on all vacancies.—Theſe alienations were, by act of parliament 1587, put a ſtop to, and ſuch tithes as had not been previouſly diſpoſed of remained with the crown unalienably.

The tithes which were then annexed to the crown may be valued and leaſed by the proprietor of the lands, but cannot be purchaſed. The officers of the crown are in uſe to grant leaſes of this deſcription of tithes for nineteen years, and

and which are renewed as matters of courſe on paying a reaſonable ſum on ſuch renewal. The ſum demanded is regulated by the yearly value of the tithes; ſo that a capital, equal to between five and ſix years amount of the tithes, laid out at the commencement of the leaſe, and improved by compound intereſt, is ſufficient to produce ſuch a ſum at the expiry as will obtain renewals to perpetuity.

Some of the clergy remained in poſſeſſion of their benefices after the Reformation; and the vacancies that happened in ſuch benefices were filled up by thoſe who aſſumed the right of preſentation. An act of parliament was ſoon afterwards paſſed, whereby the patrons were deprived of the right of patronage: but in compenſation for this ſuppoſed hardſhip, it was enacted, that the right of all tithes, ſo poſſeſſed by the clergy, ſhould be veſted in thoſe who had exerciſed the right of patronage. Patrons having acquired tithes in this way, are compelled by law to ſell them at nine years purchaſe of the yearly value of the tithes.

The ſyſtem of tithes and tithing having got into great confuſion in conſequence of the various alterations that took place in the government of the church of Scotland, thoſe intereſted found it neceſſary to ſubmit their ſeveral rights and claims to the determination and final award of Charles I. who, on the 2d of September, 1629, pro-

pronounced two decrees-arbitral, or judgments, which laid the foundation of that arrangement, reſpecting tithes and the payment of the eſtabliſhed clergy in Scotland, which has been productive of ſo many good conſequences.

The moſt important article in theſe two decrees-arbitral, is that which directs the valuation and ſale of tithes; after which the landholder is intitled to the whole crop upon payment to the proprietor of the tithes of an yearly rent, or to purchaſe them at an eaſy rate, ſubject to a reaſonable proviſion to the clergy. The words of this famous decree are, that "The rate of all tithes, where they are valued jointly with the ſtock, ſhall be a fifth part of the conſtant yearly rent that is paid for the lands." Another material circumſtance in the valuation of tithes in Scotland is, that the rents of mills, thoſe ariſing from recent improvements, and ſome others of leſs importance, are deducted from the groſs amount.

By theſe decrees, which were ratified in parliament in 1633, the proprietors of land, not having right to the tithes, were not only found entitled to ſue the titular in an action at law to aſcertain their value, but, unleſs veſted in the crown, to obtain a purchaſe of them on eſtabliſhed terms, as before mentioned. Thus, ever ſince 1633, every landholder in Scotland has had it in his power to acquire right to his own

tithes, either by purchaſe or leaſe, ſo that they ſhould be no longer payable in kind. Nevertheleſs, thoſe who neglect to ſue for a valuation may ſtill be ſubjected to all the inconveniences of the former law; as, under ſuch circumſtances, thoſe having right to the tithes may draw them in the manner commonly practiſed in England. The remedy, however, is ſo eaſy, that he muſt be a fool indeed who would ſubject himſelf or his tenants to ſuch a ſlaviſh ſervitude, while he has it in his power, by a ſimple application to the ſupreme court of the country, to aboliſh it for ever. *

The

* With a view of evincing the impropriety of landholders in Scotland embarking in expenſive improvements without having previouſly aſcertained the real ſtate of their tithes, it may be proper to remark, that the proprietors of the pariſh of Govan, in the immediate vicinity of Glaſgow, now one of the beſt cultivated diſtricts in the country, expended very conſiderable ſums on the improvement of their eſtates for a ſeries of years, but without having inveſtigated the actual ſtate of their tithes. The principal and profeſſors of the univerſity of Glaſgow had right to the tithes of this pariſh, but had been in the practice, time immemorial, of accepting a trifling modus or rate of compoſition. Recently, however, and after the whole pariſh had been improved to the higheſt poſſible degree that art and expence are thought capable of effecting, they made a demand on the proprietors for the payment of tithes in kind, or for a fifth part of the preſent real rent. The queſtion came before the ſupreme

The writer recollects ſome inſtances where proprietors in the north of Scotland, having alſo right to the tithes, and being unwilling to forego all the power of haraſſing their tenants, which attached itſelf to the ancient feudal barons, ſtill continued to draw the tithes. But they at laſt became aſhamed of ſuch conduct; and there is not now one inſtance where tithes are paid in kind, or where the tenants have any concern, either directly or indirectly, in the payment of tithes on the north ſide of the Tweed. How then, will an Engliſh reader aſk, are the Scotch clergy provided for? The anſwer is eaſy; The ſtipends provided by law for the maintenance of the Scotch clergy are ſtill payable out of the tithes. The judges of the court of ſeſſion, who act as commiſſioners for the arrangement of tithes, have right to modify reaſonable ſtipends to the parochial clergy. And accordingly, in all ſuch caſes, where the clergyman can ſhow "that the pariſh is a place of more

preme court of Scotland, and was decided in favour of the univerſity. This, however, is no fault of the tithe-laws of Scotland as preſently eſtabliſhed, but an inſtance of the bad conſequences likely to ariſe to thoſe who neglect to adopt the meaſures which theſe laws point out in the cleareſt manner as proper and neceſſary to be taken in all ſuch caſes; namely, a valuation of the tithes previous to the undertaking of any expenſive improvements.

than ordinary reſort, that the cure is burdenſome, or that the neceſſaries of life give a high price in that part of the country, or that the ſcanty allowance of ſtipend in that pariſh bears too ſmall a proportion to the weight of the charge *, provided there are free and unappropriated tithes in the pariſh, the commiſſioners, on the application of the clergyman, grant an additional ſtipend, either in money, but more generally, where practicable, in grain, as being leſs fluctuating in value than money †."

Having now ſtated the origin of tithes, the hardſhips which the farmers in England are ſubjected to, owing to the continuance of the practice of paying them in kind, and the manner in which they were commuted in Scotland; it now only remains to ſuggeſt ſome means by which an arrangement equally beneficial to agriculture may be brought about in the former kingdom.

This

* See Erſkine's Inſtitutes.

† Owing to the free tithe in the pariſh having been previouſly aſſigned to the clergyman, ſome inſtances do occur, where the commiſſioners have it not in their power to augment his ſtipend, although too ſmall for the decent maintenance of a numerous family. In all ſuch caſes it would be highly proper to apply part of the biſhop's tithes, ſuch as are now payable to the crown, for the purpoſe of rendering the ſituation of theſe clergymen, who are ſo unfortunately ſituated, more decent and reſpectable,

This has been for ſome time a very popular and much agitated queſtion; and many difficulties have been invented, ſeemingly for the purpoſe of rendering it ſtill more perplexed and complicated. Holding it as a ſacred inviolable principle, that tithes, as now payable in England, were formerly appropriated for particular purpoſes, and although in many inſtances alienations were made at different periods; yet as theſe are expreſsly or virtually confirmed by thoſe laws which protect national and individual property, therefore tithes, as now payable in the ſouthern part of the iſland, are payable in conformity to the laws of the country. This being granted, no man that has a regard for juſtice, that venerates the conſtitution, or that would wiſh to ſee the rights of property invaded, but muſt be ſatisfied, that if the preſent mode of paying tithes is aboliſhed, the clergy and the lay proprietors of tithes are, in law, juſtice, and equity, entitled to an equivalent. What that equivalent ought to be, and in what manner aſcertained, becomes the queſtion.

The writer is ſenſible that he has already been anticipated in what he is going to ſtate by every perſon who has peruſed the preceding pages with attention. It is not by appeals to quarter-ſeſſions, nor by ſpecial acts of parliament for this or that particular dioceſe or pariſh, that this great national queſtion can be determined with

propriety: It is only by a ſubmiſſion of all rights and claims of both parties to the determination of one reſpectable individual that the matter can be amicably or equitably determined. And who of all the inhabitants of this iſland is the moſt proper to be made choice of? The Sovereign of the country moſt certainly. The clergy need not be afraid to appeal to ſuch an arbiter, as, in the courſe of a long reign, he has in no inſtance or degree infringed upon their rights. The landholders and lay tithe-owners may keep their minds at eaſe, as though he has evinced the moſt ſacred regard for religion, yet it has been diveſted of ſuperſtition or bigotry. If Charles I. during the anarchy of church-government that prevailed in his time, found no difficulty in paſſing a decree in a ſimilar caſe, which, having received the ſanction of parliament as a matter of courſe, laid the foundation for a juſt and equitable arrangement of tithes, the matter may unqueſtionably be accompliſhed with much leſs difficulty at the preſent period.

Let us ſuppoſe what would be the probable conſequences of ſuch a ſubmiſſion. The arbiter would no doubt appoint commiſſioners to aſcertain the yearly value of all the landed property in England, the produce of which was ſubject to the payment of tithes*. This being done,

* Were the yearly value of the lands aſcertained by a corn-rent in place of one in money, and which might be eaſily

done, a fifth, a ſixth, or any given portion of the free rent, after the payment of parliamentary taxes affecting land, would be declared due to the tithe-owner in lieu of the payment of tithes in kind. One clauſe of the decree would probably be, to compel every lay-owner of tithes to ſell his right to the landholder at a fair and equitable, but regulated, price; and another would be, declaring the clergy entitled for ever to a fifth or ſixth, or ſome determinate portion, of the preſent real free rent of all titheable lands to which they had right, and ſubjecting the proprietors to the regular payment thereof. Thus, at once, would a load, which has for many ages preſſed down the ſpirit of the Engliſh farmers, be removed; and while all ranks and degrees applauded the equity and the propriety of the arrangement, a ſpirit for agricultural improvements would evince itſelf ſuperior to any of which the records of this country make mention.

This mode is the leſs exceptionable, as it is almoſt ſimilar to that adopted when acts of parliament are paſſed for encloſing particular pariſhes. At the firſt meeting of the commiſſioners named

eaſily done by taking the average price of corn for the laſt ſeven or ten years (excluding, however, 1795), the clergy could ſuſtain no loſs, nor would after valuations, in conſequence of the depreciation in the value of money, be rendered neceſſary.

named in the act, they direct, that all having intereſt may deliver in their claims, and the rights on which they claim, againſt a certain day. Thoſe being afterwards examined by the commiſſioners (who are neither more nor leſs than arbiters appointed by the legiſlature), their deciſion conſtitutes the law in regard to the right by which the individual proprietors hold the lands, which by the arbiter's award is aſſigned to them. In place, therefore, of multiplying acts of parliament reſpecting the adjuſtment of tithes *ad infinitum*, one only, and that a very ſhort one, ſeems neceſſary, authoriſing his Majeſty to arbitrate between the owners of tithes and the landholders; and whoſe award, like that of the commiſſioners appointed under acts of parliament for encloſures, ſhould be final, and have the effect of law.

Having laid down the general principle, it will not be expected that any attempt will be made to combat the little difficulties that may be ſtarted againſt the practicability of carrying the meaſures founded thereon into effect. Theſe the wiſdom of the arbiter is fully ſufficient to obviate. One thing is certain, viz. that a decree-arbitral, pronounced by ſuch high authority, and founded on theſe principles, would give univerſal ſatisfaction to every party concerned, and to every conſiderate individual in that kingdom.

SEC-

SECTION II.

The Poor's Laws and Poor's Rates.

NEXT in order, and ſcarcely leſs oppreſſive to the farmer, or injurious to the intereſts of agriculture in England, are the poor's laws and poor's rates.

The poor's laws and poor's rates, thoſe moſt impolitic of all impolitic laws, were unqueſtionably eſtabliſhed on principles, and from motives, that do honour to the feelings of the legiſlative body of the time in which they were enacted. They were conſidered, not only by thoſe who framed and ſupported them, but by all ſenſible and intelligent people, as the wiſeſt and moſt philanthropic of human inſtitutions. They had for their chief object the comfortable ſubſiſtence of thoſe who, feeble through age or misfortune, were rendered incapable of exerting themſelves in ſuch a manner as to procure from their labour a ſufficient ſupply of the neceſſaries of life, and that by means the moſt rational, namely, by compelling thoſe who poſſeſſed none, or but a ſmall ſhare, of "the milk of human kindneſs" to contribute in an equal proportion with thoſe who, from liberal and beneficent diſpoſitions,

would have continued to do ſo without legal compulſion. It was expected, that the enacting of theſe laws would have had the effect of introducing a ſpirit of induſtry among the lower ranks; which, while it tended to render the operation of the poor's laws in a very ſmall degree burdenſome to the wealthy part of the community, would alſo have greatly promoted the proſperity of the nation. But how blind is human foreſight, and how imperfect all human inſtitutions! Theſe laws, from the eſtabliſhment of which ſo many happy effects were expected to reſult, have tended to conſequences of the moſt alarming nature; conſequences which, if effectual meaſures are not ſpeedily taken to avert them, may and probably will ſoon end in univerſal ruin.

Lord Kames, in his Sketches of the Hiſtory of Man, obſerves, "that in Dr Davenant's time the poor's rates were about L. 700,000 annually. In 1764 they amounted to L. 2,000,000. In 1773 they amounted to L. 3,000,000, equal to ſix ſhillings in the pound land-tax." So that if they have increaſed in an equal *ratio* ſince the year 1773, which will not be denied, they cannot now (1796) be leſs than L. 5,000,000, equal, by the above calculation, to ten ſhillings in the pound land-tax.

The poor's laws, notwithſtanding the enormous aſſeſſments to which they give riſe, are by no means

means attended with the advantages which were expected. In place of tending to improve the morals, or to increaſe the induſtry of the poor, they have had quite a contrary effect. It was but a ſhort time after the enactment of theſe laws that the public were inſulted with the famous ſong of

> Hang ſorrow, caſt away care,
> The pariſh is bound to maintain us.

And how much this ſentiment ſeems to be impreſſed on the minds of the generality of that deſcription of people for whoſe benefit theſe laws were framed, is well known to all who live under their influence. They require not to be reminded how neceſſary it is become to endeavour, by every poſſible means, to curb that ſpirit of licentiouſneſs which ſo generally reigns within the walls of a pariſh work-houſe; whence ſhame and honeſt pride ſeem to be for ever baniſhed.

The ſubject of the poor's laws is too complicated to be fully explained in a work of this nature; but in ſo far as they bear hard upon the agriculture of England, it is neceſſary to take notice of them.

Theſe laws, from no alteration having been made in regard to the ſpecies of property aſſeſſable in virtue thereof, although they might have been conſidered equitable at the time they were

enacted, have, in conſequence of the alteration of circumſtances that have gradually taken place, become almoſt intolerably oppreſſive on the landed intereſt; while the merchant, the manufacturer, and the moneyed man, are either entirely exempted, or but in a very ſmall degree affected. In ſhort, poor's rates, according to the preſent eſtabliſhment, is the moſt partial tax that ever was levied in this or in any other country.

In the days of Queen Elizabeth, when poor's rates were firſt eſtabliſhed, the commerce and manufactures of England were in their infancy, and three *per cents. India bonds, exchequer bills, ſcrip omnium, &c.* were unknown. That being the caſe, permanent property only, as the rents of lands and houſes, could fall under the view of the then legiſlators as ſubject to aſſeſſment. Hence the reaſon why theſe laws, which, as formerly obſerved, may be ſuppoſed to have been arranged on equitable principles, according to the ſtate of matters at the time, have now become an engine of oppreſſion againſt two deſcriptions of people, the proprietors and farmers. That this is the caſe, is obvious on the moſt curſory view of the ſubject. The poor's rates, for inſtance, in the pariſh of Kettering, in the county of Northampton, were laſt year (1795) at fifteen ſhillings in the pound of *rack rent* *. Suppoſe,

* The writer has been informed, that, in the city of Norwich, the poor's rates were the ſame year at twenty-four

poſe, therefore, that a proprietor in that pariſh was entitled to receive L. 1000 of rent from his tenants, they would at the ſame time have to pay the overſeers of the poor L. 750 0 0

Suppoſe further, that a merchant manufacturer, or ſtock-holder reſiding in the ſame pariſh, had a clear annual revenue of L. 1750, ariſing from the profits of trade, or the intereſt of money in the funds, he would probably poſſeſs houſes at an eſtabliſhed rent of L. 60 a-year. In which caſe his aſſeſſment for the maintenance of the poor would amount to 45 0 0

Difference, L. 705 0 0

From this it appears, that the land-owner poſſeſſing an eſtate of the value of L. 1750 a-year, pays upwards of L. 700 towards the ſupport of the poor beyond what could be legally demanded from the merchant, the manufacturer, or the ſtock-holder, under ſimilar circumſtances, in regard to the extent of funds. Were the

four ſhillings in the pound; that is, while the tenant paid L. 20 to his landlord, he was obliged to pay L. 24 towards the maintenance of the poor. The cauſe of ſo high an aſſeſſment was, as may eaſily be ſuppoſed, owing to the failure of the manufactures in conſequence of the war.

the land-holders the only perſons that ſuffer by this partial, and conſequently oppreſſive tax, it would not be generally regretted; as it is well known that it is to their ſupineneſs in not applying to the legiſlature for an alteration of the exiſting poor's laws, that the evil has arrived at ſuch a height, and that ſuch heavy aſſeſſments are rendered neceſſary: but the farmers, unfortunately, are alſo ſufferers, and, owing to the concurrence of ſeveral cauſes, frequently to a very conſiderable extent. In the inſtance now mentioned, *viz.* the pariſh of Kettering, the poor's rates, previous to the commencement of the war, did not exceed 5 s. in the pound; ſo that from that period, and during its continuance, a tenant paying L. 100 a-year of rent to his landlord, has to pay L. 50 of additional poor's rates, and that whether he poſſeſſes his farm under leaſe or at the will of his landlord. If the farm be held under leaſe for a term of years, the tenant can have no recourſe on the landlord, who generally ſtipulates that he ſhall pay all pariſh-taxes. If, on the other hand, it be held from year to year, the tenant is, from that circumſtance, ſo dependent on the proprietor that he dare not make the leaſt objection againſt paying the additional aſſeſſment, from an apprehenſion of being turned out of his farm, and thereby deprived of the means of providing for his family. The proprietors therefore pay only the ordinary poor's rates

rates, the tenants being ſubjected in payment of ſuch as are rendered neceſſary in conſequence of the nation being at any time engaged in war, or that a ſtagnation of paper-credit, or any other circumſtance occurs whereby the manufacturers are interrupted. While the manufacturers can promote their own intereſt by employing the labouring claſs of people, they do ſo; but when they perceive they can no longer benefit themſelves, they ſend them home to their different pariſhes, to be maintained at the farmer's expence till the return of peace, or other favourable circumſtances occur, to create a new demand for manufacturing labourers. Mr Marſhall, in his Rural Economy of the Weſt of England, Vol. I. p. 290, mentions, as an evidence of the miſchief which manufacturers are capable of entailing on agriculture, "That a woollen manufacture was ſome time ago ſet on foot at Modbury, and carried on with ſpirit and with ſucceſs to the individuals who proſecuted it; but their end being anſwered, the manufacture ceaſed, *and all the vice and debility which it had drawn together were left as a load upon the pariſh.* The conſequence of which is, the occupiers of land within the townſhip of Modbury are now paying five ſhillings in the pound to the poor, while thoſe of the ſurrounding pariſhes do not pay two ſhillings." Numerous inſtances of this ſort might be mentioned to prove, that

while the manufacturers pocket all the profit that can be derived from employing theſe people in proſperous times, they conſign them to the farmer's charge the moment the wages which they chooſe to give is inadequate to their maintenance, or when they, the manufacturers, cannot profit by continuing them in their ſervice.

One other circumſtance connected with the poor's laws of England requires to be mentioned as productive of many evil conſequences, namely, that which regards the gaining a ſettlement in a pariſh. It was ſtated in the Introduction how much ſuperior the ſituation of all ranks of people was in this country than in ſome parts of the continent of Europe; particularly in Ruſſia, where the peaſantry may be conſidered as appendages of the ſoil, being doomed to cultivate a particular tract of land, whoever became the proprietor. It is with much regret the writer muſt mention, that a ſpecies of ſlavery exiſts in England nearly of the ſame nature with that now mentioned. Can that country be called free where the great body of the people are bound to reſide in the particular ſpots where they were born? Yet this is certainly the caſe in England. The peaſantry of the preſent day are bound by laws, enacted long before they were born, to confine themſelves to their own pariſh; and if perchance they emigrate to a *ſtrange country*, although perhaps only to the adjoining pariſh, they

are

are not only prevented from exerciſing the rights of active citizens; but when there is the leaſt proſpect of their becoming burdenſome to the inhabitants, they are hunted home like a parcel of ſtrayed cattle or ſheep that had overleaped the incloſures in which they were confined. Why not permit the poor to ſeek a livelihood wherever work offers, or inclination leads them? In place of being ſubjected to be taken up as vagrants, if found out of their own pariſh, a pariſh perhaps in which they cannot find employment, would it not be for the intereſt of the community were they permitted to go where they could render eſſential ſervice to the public, and where they have a certainty of ſupporting themſelves and their families, without being reduced to the neceſſity of making a mortifying application to an unfeeling pariſh officer? Were ſuch an alteration to take place, both the rich and the poor would experience the benefit. But while the laws of pariſh ſettlements remain on their preſent footing, let Engliſhmen, while they boaſt of the liberty they enjoy, reflect on theſe, and they will find that they accord not with genuine liberty; that wherever ſuch laws are in force, rational liberty muſt be conſidered as in ſhackles.

While this order of things remains, while the manufacturers ſhall continue in a great meaſure exempted from contributing towards the ex-

pence of maintaining thoſe people who have become old and infirm in their ſervice; while the farmers are ſubjected to ſuch heavy exactions on every interruption to which the manufactures of the country are liable—agriculture muſt remain in a languid ſtate, and the ſpirit of the farmer continue depreſſed.

But let us turn to a more pleaſant ſubject, and by deſcribing the manner in which the poor in Scotland are maintained, evince in how ſmall a degree the expence of their maintenance affects the agriculture of that country.

The ſum neceſſary to maintain the poor in any particular pariſh in Scotland, eſpecially in the country, amounts only to a few pounds in the year; which may be accounted for by ſtating the ſimple manner in which they live; oatmeal cooked in various ways, and potatoes, being their principal food. When reduced, by unforeſeen accidents, or old age, to have recourſe to the pariſh for relief, they are ſatisfied with a very ſmall ſum, two or three ſhillings in a month; aſking in charity what their neighbours in the ſame claſs in England demand as a matter of right. Indeed few, but ſuch as are deſtitute of relations able to ſupport them, make the application; it being conſidered diſgraceful, both to themſelves and their relations, to have their names entered on what is called the *poor's roll.*

The money neceſſary for the ſupport of the

poor is, for the moſt part, made up of voluntary contributions from the more wealthy inhabitants, which takes place every Lord's day before or after divine ſervice.—There is alſo an old Scotch act of Parliament ſtill in force, by which the proprietors and tenants are liable to be aſſeſſed equally in ſuch additional ſum as may be judged neceſſary to ſupport the poor of each pariſh: but this act is very ſeldom put in force, except in large towns, or in thoſe pariſhes in the neighbourhood of the mountainous parts of the country, where the greateſt number of poor people reſide.

The ſlaviſh law of pariſh ſettlement is unknown in Scotland; the labouring poor, like the rich, are at liberty to ſettle where they can diſpoſe of their time, or their talents, to the beſt advantage. Should a poor family, after having received ſupply from the funds of the pariſh in which they reſide, remove to another, that pariſh in which they formerly reſided, in ſome caſes, ſupply their neceſſities for two or three years after their removal; at the expiration of which period they become entitled to receive a ſhare of the funds of that pariſh in which they are reſident. But although this regulation has, it is believed, the ſanction of law, there are very few inſtances where it becomes neceſſary to enforce it.

The maintenance of the poor in Scotland cannot therefore be ſaid to be oppreſſive to any

claſs or deſcription of the inhabitants. The writer, however, cannot avoid laying hold of this opportunity of remarking, that a diſpoſition to encourage the introduction of poor's laws appear to evince itſelf in many parts of that kingdom. A pound rate is already eſtabliſhed in Berwickſhire; 3d. or 4d. on the acre of improved land is payable by the farmers; and in many country pariſhes in other diſtricts yearly aſſeſſments are made. Should the negligence of the proprietors to the ſituation of the poor be the means of rendering the eſtabliſhment of additional poor's laws neceſſary, their conduct muſt be conſidered by every thinking perſon as reprehenſible to the higheſt degree. The exiſting laws are fully ſufficient for the purpoſe of ſecuring the means of ſubſiſtence to the induſtrious poor. By their being at liberty to continue to reſide in the place where they had ſpent the active part of life, after they are able no longer to procure themſelves the neceſſaries of life by the labour of their hands, the manufacturers are compelled to contribute more liberally to their relief than if, under the authority of laws of ſettlement, the manufacturers, or mercantile or moneyed people, reſiding in towns, had it in their power to order them, in the decline of life, when their period of labour is for ever paſt and gone, to the pariſhes in the country in which they were born.

A late publication bears the title of *France*

a Warning to Britain!—Let the proprietors of Scotland ever conſider the ſituation of England, in conſequence of eſtabliſhing impolitic poor's laws, as a warning to them againſt any innovation of that nature. Let it be their ſtudy that the poor in Scotland ſhall paſs the remainder of their days without ever having to apprehend the fear of want; but let them never make ſuch an eſtabliſhment as can tend, in any degree, to render morality and induſtry empty names.

The following very ſenſible obſervations, contained in the Scots Farmer, vol. i. p. 253, reſpecting the operation of the poor's laws in England, merit the moſt particular attention of every proprietor in both kingdoms. "For my own part (ſays the writer), I am not ſo well ſatisfied of the goodneſs of theſe things (the mode of levying taxes for the ſupport of the poor, and the manner in which they are maintained): I am for doing good to the poor, but I differ in opinion about the means. I think the beſt way of doing good to the poor is not making them eaſy in poverty, but leading or driving them out of it. In my youth I travelled much, and I obſerved in different countries, that the more public proviſions were made for the poor, the leſs they provided for themſelves, and of courſe became poorer; and, on the contrary, the leſs was done for them, the more they did for themſelves, and became richer. There is no country in the world

world where ſo many proviſions are eſtabliſhed for them; ſo many hoſpitals to receive them when they are ſick and lame, founded and maintained by voluntary charities; ſo many alms-houſes for the aged of both ſexes, together with a ſolemn general law made by the rich to ſubject their eſtates to a heavy tax for the ſupport of the poor, as in England. Under all theſe obligations are our poor modeſt, humble, and thankful? and do they uſe their beſt endeavours to maintain themſelves and lighten our ſhoulders of this burden? On the contrary, I affirm that there is no country in the world in which the poor are more idle, diſſolute, drunken, and inſolent. The day you paſſed that act (addreſſing himſelf to the public), you took away from before their eyes the greateſt of all inducements to induſtry, frugality, and ſobriety, by giving them a dependence on ſomewhat elſe than a careful accumulation during youth and health for ſupport in age and ſickneſs. *In ſhort, you offered a premium for the encouragement of idleneſs, and you ſhould not now wonder that it has had its effect in the increaſe of poverty.* Repeal that law, and you will ſoon ſee a change in their manners. *Saint Monday* and *Saint Tueſday* will ſoon ceaſe to be holidays. Six days ſhalt thou labour, though one of the old commandments, long treated as out of date, will again be looked upon as a reſpectable precept. Induſtry will increaſe,

creaſe, and with it plenty, among the lower people. Their circumſtances will mend; and more will be done for their happineſs, by inuring them to provide for themſelves, than could be done by dividing all your eſtates among them."

The good ſenſe contained in theſe obſervations ought to make a deep impreſſion on the minds of all who read them, as every day's experience proves that the poor's laws in England, as they are preſently executed, are attended with all the evils above deſcribed; and that an alteration of them has become indiſpenſably neceſſary, as one of the moſt effectual means that can be adopted for preſerving the conſtitution entire.

The Britiſh legiſlature has been for ſome time greatly alarmed at the rapid increaſe of the poor's rates in England, and ſeems fully ſenſible of the pernicious conſequences likely to enſue, without ſome radical cure is ſpeedily applied. Of what nature that may be, the writer will not hazard a conjecture. Very material alterations muſt at all events neceſſarily take place in regard to the objects of taxation, as well as in reſpect to the modes in which the money levied is expended. At preſent a ſyſtem of peculation ſeems eſtabliſhed, in too many inſtances, among thoſe whoſe province it is to expend the money ſo levied for the purpoſes to which the law directs it ſhould be applied. The ſhameful expence

pence of litigations between pariſhes, reſpecting the ſettlement of individual paupers, and the extravagant charge often incurred in tranſporting them from one pariſh to another, according to the preſent ſyſtem, is often ſo great, as to add very conſiderably to the ſum total neceſſary to be levied on the induſtrious and opulent inhabitants.

The eſtabliſhment of friendly ſocieties would certainly, as formerly mentioned, be attended with very beneficial conſequences; and perhaps, in place of countenancing the induſtrious labourers in thus providing a fund, whence, in caſe of accident or old age, they might draw ſupplies, it might be highly proper to frame a law, whereby labourers of all deſcriptions ſhould be *compelled* to aſſign a portion of the fruits of their labour, during the period of their health and ſtrength, in order to eſtabliſh a fund for their relief, or the relief of their neighbours, when misfortunes overtake them. The eſtabliſhment of provident ſocieties or clubs, whereby, during the period that the members are in health, and in the vigour of life, they may, by a ſmall weekly payment, make a ſuitable proviſion from the fruits of their own induſtry againſt the period when ſickneſs, misfortune, or old age and infirmity, ſhall overtake them, is a meaſure the more it is known the more it will meet with general approbation.

By

By ſome, provident ſocieties may be thought very remotely, if at all, connected with the ſubject of Britiſh agriculture. To the more intelligent, the beſt means of providing for the induſtrious peaſantry, whoſe "rough laborious hand," as it was formerly obſerved, allows the wealthy to live in indolence and eaſe, will always be an intereſting ſubject. The more ſo it muſt prove, as the ſuggeſting proper meaſures for that effect, if attended to, will infallibly remove, in a great degree, the load of poor's rates which hangs like a mill-ſtone about the neck of the Engliſh farmers; a load which, if effectual meaſures be not in a ſhort time adopted to remove, muſt neceſſarily be attended with conſequences of the moſt alarming nature, as its weight is increaſing with ſuch rapidity, that in a few years it muſt become altogether inſupportable.

"The friendly ſocieties (ſays a very reſpectable writer), voluntarily entered into by the induſtrious poor, have relieved many a worthy character in the times of their ſickneſs, infirmities, misfortunes, and old age, in a more ample and comfortable manner than they would have been provided for by the pariſh levies. Why may not all the poorer ſort in their youth be compelled to provide, out of their induſtry, for their old age and infirmities? Why may not the poor of every pariſh be by law created friendly ſocieties? Suppoſe the maſter of every

ſervant and labourer was obliged to retain, out of the wages of each, three-pence a week, and pay the ſame in the reſpective names of ſuch ſervants and labourers into the pariſh ſtock. When a ſervant or labourer removes from one pariſh to another, he might be entitled to a certificate from the pariſh he leaves (if he has drawn no pay) of the amount of the ſum total he has contributed; and when he has gained a ſettlement in another pariſh, that pariſh might be entitled to draw on the firſt for the money the pauper has paid; ſo that every man may draw his fortune after him, which may prevent many a litigation reſpecting the ſettlement of the poor, and be a great ſpur to induſtry *."

Mr Marſhall, in his Rural Economy of the Weſt of England, mentions, that ſeveral of theſe valuable inſtitutions have exiſted in Devonſhire for about thirty years; and that their good effects are ſo evident, that the encouragement of them ought to become a national object of the firſt magnitude; not more with a view to leſſen the preſent heavy burdens of the poor's rates, than to inſtil into the lower claſſes of ſociety a principle of frugality, and a ſenſe of ſocial duties, which theſe meetings, under ſuitable regulations, cannot fail of producing.

As

* R. B. Anderſon's Letter in the Annals of Agriculture, vol. ii. p. 4.

As there is perhaps no perſon in theſe kingdoms who has devoted more time and attention to the important ſubject of making a proper proviſion for the poor of England, without rendering that proviſion a burden on a portion only of the community (the proprietors and farmers), than Mr Pew of Shaftſbury, the peruſal of the general outlines of his plan for the general prevention of poverty, as publiſhed in the 7th vol. of the Bath Papers, cannot fail to prove extremely intereſting to every humane and judicious reader. After ſtating, in a letter addreſſed to Mr Roſe of the Treaſury (by whom he had been applied to for his opinion regarding friendly ſocieties), that if the collection of a ſmall but voluntary tax upon the ſober and induſtrious citizen (alluding to theſe ſocieties) for his own uſe when in diſtreſs, be in ſome degree beneficial, he conceives that the collection of a ſtill ſmaller, though compulſitory, tax upon all ranks of men, the idle, the improvident, and the irreſolute, as well as the induſtrious citizen, for the ſame purpoſe, would be a meaſure as much more beneficial as it is more extenſive, he goes on to detail his plan in the following words, viz.

"Clauſe 1. That a proper officer be appointed for ſuch an extent of diſtrict as he may be ſuppoſed conveniently to ſuperintend, to take a liſt of the names and places of abode of all males

above the age of ſeventeen years, in the ſame manner as the liſt is made out for the militia.

II. That every ſuch male pay two-pence per week, and every ſuch female three farthings or one penny per week, into the hands of the above officer, for the purpoſes hereafter to be ſpecified.

III. The above officer ſhall be empowered to furniſh employment for all ſuch as are willing to work, and who cannot find it for themſelves. Whether this officer ſhould be choſen annually in rotation, after the manner of an overſeer, or whether he ſhould be a permanent officer upon an adequate ſallary, will be a matter of future conſideration; but if the latter, he ſhould be paid by the community, and not out of the fund.

IV. All the poor being thus ſure of employment, the maſter or miſtreſs for whom they work ſhould be juſtified in retaining theſe ſums reſpectively out of their wages; and whether they do ſo or not, they ſhould (in default of the individual) be anſwerable to the officer for its payment. All maſters and miſtreſſes of families ſhould in like manner be anſwerable for their ſervants; and all keepers of lodgings, &c. for their inmates.

V. Theſe ſums ſhould be carried weekly to the general treaſurer of the *diviſion*, who ſhould give ſufficient ſecurity for the ſame.

VI. Out of this fund every male who is really

ly

ly incapable of labour ſhould (*by virtue of a certificate from the above officer*) have a *right to demand* from the treaſurer five ſhillings per week for the firſt ſix months, ſhould his illneſs laſt ſo long, and four ſhillings per week after that period, until he again become capable of labour.

Every female ſhould have a *right to demand* two ſhillings and ſixpence per week for the firſt ſix months, and afterwards two ſhillings per week, until ſhe be again able to work: ſhe ſhould alſo be entitled to four weeks full pay at every lying-in. Every male above the age of ſixty-five years, whether capable of labour or not, ſhould be entitled to four ſhilling per week during life. Every female after the ſame age two ſhillings.

VII. Any perſon having three children under nine years of age ſhould be entitled to one ſhilling and ſixpence per week, until the eldeſt ſhould have attained the age of nine years; and if he has more than three under that age, he ſhould be entitled to one ſhilling and ſixpence per week for each above that number; and if any one or more of his children ſhould happen to be idiotic, inſane, or otherwiſe ſo far diſabled, either in body or mind, as to be utterly incapable of labour, each of them ſhould ſtill be conſidered as under the age of nine years, and paid for accordingly.

If a mother ſhould be left a widow with three

children under nine years of age, ſhe ſhould be entitled to receive five ſhillings; if with two children, three ſhillings; and if with one child, one ſhilling and ſixpence per week; if with more than three under that age, one ſhilling per week for each above that number; it being admitted that all her time is taken up by three, and allowance made for it, but that ſhe is capable of looking after, and taking care of, a greater number. The wives of men ſerving in the militia, and in the army or navy, ſhould, during the abſence of their huſbands, be conſidered and provided for in all reſpects as widows.

If a child ſhould be left an orphan under nine years of age, two ſhillings per week ſhould be allowed from the fund for its maintenance; if more than one of the ſame family, one ſhilling and ſixpence per week for each above that number. As there is probably no leſs friendſhip amongſt the lower than amongſt the higher orders of ſociety, it would generally happen that ſome friend or relation of the deceaſed would gladly take charge of the children, provided they could do ſo without eſſential loſs to themſelves. This regulation would effectually prevent that loſs; and to compenſate in ſome degree for the want of parental affection, ſixpence per week more is allowed for the maintenance of an orphan, or a family of orphans, than for a child, or a family of children, who ſtill retain their mother.

mother. If, however, any beings ſhould be ſo *uncommonly unfortunate* as not to be thus *adopted*, the officer above-mentioned ſhould be obliged to provide a receptacle for them, which he will always be able to do for the ſum or ſums above-mentioned.

VIII. All children above nine years of age, if in health, ſhould, if they have no parents, or their parents are not able to provide for them, be put out after the manner of pariſh apprentices.

IX. All perſons neglecting or refuſing to pay their contribution, ſhould be committed to hard labour in the houſe of correction for the ſpace of ———.

X. If the fund ſhould at any time fall ſhort of the neceſſary demands upon it, the deficiency ſhould be made up by a pariſh rate, collected in the ſame manner as at preſent; but without any ſenſe of obligation on the part of the multitude (for there would be *no poor*), who ſhould in all caſes receive their relief in the *nature of a demand*.

XI. If the fund (as moſt probably would happen) ſhould increaſe beyond the neceſſary demands upon it, the ſurplus ſhould on no occaſion be diverted to any other purpoſe than the benefit of the ſubſcribers; but when the price of grain exceeded that which brings it eaſily within the reach of the multitude (ſuppoſe 6s.

or

or 6s. 6d. the Wincheſter buſhel), every perſon who had three children or more under nine years of age ſhould have a right to demand ſuch a ſum as, in proportion to the number of his family, would reduce the various neceſſary articles of life (taking wheat as the ſtandard) to a moderate price; and, indeed, I think in all caſes, when the price of grain exceeds that proportion at which the *induſtrious labourer* can afford to come to market, *found policy*, as well as *common humanity*, requires that all large families ſhould be entitled to receive ſuch a ſum as above ſpecified, although it ſhould be neceſſary to collect a rate for the purpoſe.

I need not perhaps add, that every officer entruſted with money ſhould give ample ſecurity for his integrity, and the faithful diſcharge of his duty; that due checks ſhould be eſtabliſhed to prevent embezzlement; and that all accounts ſhould be made up and balanced ſo frequently as to prevent the probability of miſtakes.

And ſtill more effectually to ſecure the complete execution of the plan, it would perhaps be neceſſary to appoint a general inſpector of the funds, who, with the aſſiſtance of a few ſubordinate officers, would probably be able to ſuperintend the whole kingdom."

No apology is requiſite for inſerting at full length the heads of a plan which, if carried into execution by the legiſlature, muſt in its conſequences

quences promote moſt eſſentially the well-being of the great body of the people, as well as the intereſts of thoſe concerned in the commerce, manufactures, and agriculture of the country. The eſtabliſhment of friendly or provident ſocieties has, in numerous inſtances, been found productive of the moſt ſalutary effects; and were they as well ſupported and countenanced in all the counties of Great Britain as they are in that of Monmouth *, where, in conſequence of the country gentlemen magnanimouſly deſiring their names may be inrolled in the liſt of contributing members, every degree of ſupport and countenance is given, compulſitory acts of parliament might be rendered unneceſſary. But as that mode of conduct, however laudable, will not in all probability be generally adopted, it would certainly be for the intereſt of all concerned were an act of parliament to be paſſed framed on the principles ſo clearly deſcribed by Mr Pew.

By ſuch an act, added to the regulations formerly propoſed reſpecting building cottages, the ſituation of the peaſantry and others in the labouring claſs in this country would be moſt materially improved; and while the farmers and manufacturers would thereby in time procure an

* See the Report of the County of Monmouth.

abundant ſupply of labourers, theſe would be maintained in ſickneſs and in old age, without thoſe heavy aſſeſſments to which, under the preſent ſyſtem, the proprietors and farmers are chiefly ſubjected.

SEC.

SECTION III.

Cuſtomary Tenures.

A CONSIDERABLE portion of the lands of England is held under lords of manors by copyhold or cuſtomary tenure, ſubject to the payment of fines on the alienation of the property, the death of the lord or of the tenant, and alſo to the payment of certain yearly rents, and the performance of various ſervices.

That this ſort of tenure ſhould be conſidered not only as a grievance, but alſo as an obſtacle to agricultural improvement, cannot appear ſurpriſing, when it is remarked that the lord of the manor is entitled to two years improved value of the copyholds on the death of the copyhold tenant, or on the alienation of the property. Under ſuch circumſtances it is not probable that the poſſeſſors will be diſpoſed to a liberal expenditure of money on the improvement of lands held by a tenure of this reſtricted kind.

The ſervices performable by the *proprietors* of copyhold lands in the north-weſt of England in particular are diſgraceful in the extreme, and ſuch as, in a free country, ought to be for ever aboliſhed. They conſiſt of cutting, drying, and

leading the lord's peats, ploughing and harrowing his land, reaping his corn, making his hay, carrying his letters, &c. whenever and how often ſuch ſervices are demanded *. It could not certainly be a matter of much difficulty to arrange general terms, on which copyholders might have it in their power to enfranchiſe their eſtates, by payment of a certain ſum to the lords of manors for the total abolition of this remain of the feudal ſyſtem. So far as the writer knows, lords of manors may, as the law now ſtands, make any arbitrary demand they pleaſe on their vaſſals for the enfranchiſement of their lands; and if not complied with, they muſt remain in the ſtate of ſlavery above deſcribed. Whereas, were an equitable mode eſtabliſhed, whereby the copyholder could purchaſe his independence on reaſonable terms, *no Engliſhman* would continue in a ſtate of bondage, nor would the improvement of the country be obſtructed by the arbitrary exactions of the ſuperiors and great landholders.

Manorial rights have been handed down from father to ſon for many generations: and as by the law of the country the preſent poſſeſſors have as

* If the poorer tenants in the north of Scotland are ſubjected to ſuch ſlaviſh ſervices, they may conſole themſelves with the reflection, that ſome of their betters, ſome of the *proprietors* of England, are in a ſimilar ſituation.

as good a title to exerciſe theſe rights as any of their predeceſſors, it would be unjuſt to deprive them of that priviledge without giving them an equitable compenſation; but when the exerciſe of theſe rights ſtands in the way of improving the national territory, and of ſupplying the public markets with proviſions, it muſt be deemed impolitic in the legiſlature to permit them to exiſt.

It is very generally known, that one great obſtacle to improvement ariſes from a laudable anxiety in the cuſtomary tenants to have their little patrimony deſcend to their children. Theſe ſmall properties (loaded with fines, heriots, and boondays, joined to the neceſſary expence of bringing up and educating a numerous family) can only be handed down from father to ſon by the utmoſt thrift, hard labour, and penurious living; and every little ſaving being hoarded up for the payment of the *eventful fine*, leaves nothing for the expence of travelling to ſee improved modes of culture; to gain a knowledge of the management and profits of different breeds of ſtock; and to be convinced, by ocular proofs, that their own ſituations are capable of producing ſimilar advantages: and even ſhould they be half inclined to adopt a new practice, prudence whiſpers, that ſhould the experiment fail, it would require the ſavings of many years to make good the deficiency. Cuſtomary tenures

is allowed on all hands to be a great grievance and check to improvement. Might not this be done away on the diviſion of common rights? The yearly value of the various cuſtoms, fines, &c. might be ſettled by commiſſioners, and twenty-five, or any reaſonable number of years purchaſe on this yearly value, be the price of the enfranchiſement, which might be paid in money, or in land, at the option of the copyhold tenant *.

It is impoſſible any ſolid argument can be urged againſt the propriety of aboliſhing, without delay, every remain of the feudal ſyſtem, where it tends, in the ſmalleſt degree, to obſtruct the general improvement of the country. This may be accompliſhed with very little trouble. All that appears neceſſary, in regard to copyhold lands, for inſtance, is, either to adopt the plan abovementioned, or to paſs one general act of parliament, empowering thoſe who hold their eſtates only *mediately* of the crown, but *immediately* of a ſubject ſuperior, to demand of that ſuperior, that, by means of legal proof, he ſhall aſcertain the actual yearly value in money or grain of the fines payable on the alienation of the property, the death of the ſuperior, or lord, or of the copyholder. Where perſonal ſervices are payable, as caſting peats, carrying letters, &c. the

* See the Report of the County of Cumberland.

the value of theſe ſhould alſo be aſcertained, and the proprietors, ſo ſituated, have it in their power to become independent by paying a reaſonable number of years purchaſe, or by making payment annually of the ſum thus aſcertained to be the value of theſe fines and ſervices. Were ſuch an arrangement to be made, copyholders would have an inducement to cultivate their lands in the beſt poſſible manner; becauſe they, not the ſuperiors, would reap the profits ariſing from improved cultivation. But people there are who oppoſe any amendment, becauſe every alteration is a reform. Such people ought, however, to reflect, that alterations and reforms have taken place in all ages, and that it is thereto owing our conſtitution remains ſo entire. A cuſtom, which it may not be improper here to mention, as it concerned thoſe who cultivated the ſoil, was long eſtabliſhed in this country, and at laſt commuted for certain ſtipulated payments. Our hiſtorians aſſert *, that Evenus III. eſtabliſhed an ordinance, whereby a lord of lands was entitled by law to the firſt night of every bride dwelling on his eſtate, or imported into it by marriage. This ordinance, after it had continued in force for a conſiderable period, was at laſt aboliſhed by Malcom Canmore, who fixed a price at which every man might purchaſe to

* Buch. lib. 4. c. 21. Spottiſwood, p. 29.

to himſelf and to his bride an exemption from that violation; and which price was paid either in money or cows. A clauſe, reſpecting the *Merchetæ mulierum* is found in the oldeſt deeds extant. Boece affirms, that the converſion was exacted and paid among his countrymen in his time; and they are ſtill conveyed in charters granted *at preſent* *.

If in the barbarous days of Malcom Canmore this groſs ordinance, which may be ſuppoſed ſo congenial to the diſpoſitions of a rude uncivilized people as the feudal barons certainly were, could be commuted by the payment of a ſtipulated fine, how much more eaſy would it be in the preſent times to make an arrangement, whereby all ſuch ſervices as above-mentioned ſhould be for ever aboliſhed? The continuance of ſuch ſlaviſh cuſtoms muſt be attributed to the want of attention, not of energy, in the executive government of the country.

* Wallace on Ancient Peerages, p. 56.

SEC-

SECTION IV.

The improper Management of the Crown-Lands.

FROM what was formerly ſtated reſpecting the crown-lands, and which alſo applied to thoſe in poſſeſſion of his Royal Highneſs the Prince of Wales, the reader is not to learn, that they are neither in that improved ſtate into which they are capable of being put, nor productive to that degree which they might be rendered, were they in poſſeſſion of private individuals. So far as the writer has ſeen, he heſitates not to ſay, that without theſe lands are *by ſome means or other improved*, it would be attended with no material bad conſequences, in regard to ſupplying the public markets with proviſions, were the whole of them to be ſwallowed up by an earthquake. At preſent they are, as formerly obſerved, a blot on the map of Great Britain; and as ſuch they are likely to remain till the wiſdom of government ſhall point out a way whereby they can, at a fair market price, become the property of thoſe who would be diſpoſed to expend money, labour, and attention, on the improvement of them. The circumſtance of theſe extenſive tracts of improveable land remaining annexed to

the crown, under any change of management that may, while they remain ſo annexed, be adopted, will always operate as an unſurmountable obſtacle to the improvement of them; whereas, were they lotted off and ſold in the manner before ſuggeſted, theſe meaſures would give a ſpring to the agriculture of the different diſtricts where the crown-lands are ſituated; and would not only inſure the ſpeedy and complete improvement of them, but alſo of thoſe in the neighbourhood, which are at preſent allowed to remain in a like waſte and neglected ſtate.

SEC-

SECTION V.

Church-Lands.

LANDS held by corporations, whether civil or religious, experience has proved, are in ſcarcely any inſtance managed in ſuch a way as to inſure their permanent improvement.

"Glebe, or church lands (ſays the writer of the Report of the County of Lancaſter), or any other appropriated to the ſupport of meeting-houſes, and thoſe lands which appertain to ſmall livings, purchaſed by the bounty of Queen Anne, are generally under a bad ſtate of cultivation; the uncertainty of leaſe, depending on a contingency of a ſingle life, operating as ſtrong obſtacles to any degree of even moderate improvements; and in conſequence they are in general under the very worſt ſort of management." This account of the management of church-lands is ſtrictly true when applied to other parts of England as well as to the county of Lancaſter. Owing to the depreciation that has of late years taken place in the value of money, it was once the writer's opinion, that an equivalent for tithes ought to be given in property land; as any arrangement founded on money, as a medium by

which the value of the equivalent was to be aſcertained in future times, would be rendered very uncertain; whereas the produce of lands, at all times, bears a reference to the value of money at the time *. He is, however, now ſatisfied, that the mode of arranging the tithes, mentioned in the former part of this chapter, is in every reſpect ſuperior to any other that can be adopted; and has this advantage, namely, that the lands in the one caſe remain in the poſſeſſion of perſons whoſe families have a permanent intereſt in the improvement of them; whereas, were any part of them given off as glebe-lands, the officiating clergyman, having only a liferent intereſt, it could not be ſuppoſed that any permanent improvements would be effected by him, or that he would grant ſuch liberal terms to a tenant as would induce him to lay out ſuch ſums as were neceſſary to be expended to render them productive.

The modes of leaſing lands, either for a term of twenty-one years, renewable on payment of a fine at the end of every ſeven, or on one or two lives renewable on the demiſe of one of the perſons named in the leaſe, on the payment alſo of an arbitrary fine, as practiſed by the dignitaries of the church of England, are well known to operate powerfully againſt the improvement of

* See the Editor's Report of Northamptonſhire.

of the church-lands. It is impoſſible it ſhould be otherwiſe; for who, in his ſenſes, will think of expending money on the improvement of land, when theſe very improvements are to operate againſt himſelf at the renewal of a leaſe; which in the one caſe is limited to ſeven years, and in the other is held on a very precarious tenure? In the liſt of thoſe members who compoſe the Board of Agriculture, we find the names of ſeveral biſhops. It is hoped, that as a compenſation for the ſpiritual inſtructions which they will no doubt from time to time inſtil into the minds of the lay-members, they in return will inſtruct theſe right reverend characters in the beſt methods of letting and managing the church-lands; ſo that, while the revenues of their ſucceſſors in office will be greatly increaſed, their flocks will alſo be more abundantly fed. Should this, however, not happen, the intervention of the legiſlature ſeems indiſpenſably neceſſary. Such regulations, in regard to leaſing the church-lands, ought to be made as would leave the tenants at liberty to expend part of their capitals in the improvement of their farms, without being compelled to pay a ranſom at the end of every ſeven years for the improvements which their own money, labour, and induſtry, have effected in the intervals.

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SECTION VI.

Lands held under Deeds of Entail.

As the intereſts of commerce and manufactures, theſe darling objects of the executive government of this country, are as deeply affected by the now too generally eſtabliſhed practice of entailing eſtates as thoſe of agriculture, there is every reaſon to hope that this pernicious cuſtom will not be allowed for any length of time to obſtruct the improvement of the Britiſh ſoil. Enough has already been ſaid to prove the evil tendency of this meaſure, whether the intereſt of the merchant, the manufacturer, or the poſſeſſor for the time is conſidered *. Beſides the loſs and inconvenience ariſing to theſe various deſcriptions of people, and that it is at beſt but a ridiculous, if not an impious, attempt to perpetuate a name, a name perhaps which ought for ever to ſink into oblivion, the entailing of eſtates is attended with conſequences extremely prejudicial to the community at large, as operating againſt the improvement of the country. What inducement can the *chance poſſeſſor* of an entailed

* See vol. i. p. 368, &c.

tailed eſtate have to expend part of his annual revenue on the improvement of a property, which may probably in a few years deſcend to a perſon with whom he is but very remotely connected? And how much leſs inducement ſtill can a tenant on ſuch an eſtate have to lay out his money or beſtow his attention on the improvement of a farm, when it is not in the landlord's power to grant a leaſe of ſuch duration as to recompenſe him either for his labour or for the money expended? Whoever will examine into the ſtate of agriculture on an old entailed eſtate, and compare it with that on one held without any reſtrictions, will be ſatisfied of the abſurdity of permitting ſuch a practice to be continued. They will be ſatisfied that the entailed eſtate is a monument of the entailer's folly, and an evidence of the impolicy of not framing a law to render it impoſſible for any perſon to expoſe himſelf to poſterity by following ſuch an example. Such a law would meet univerſal approbation; and its effects in Scotland in particular would be ſuch, as muſt neceſſarily, and to a very great degree, promote the public weal.

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SECTION VII.

Commons and Commonable Rights.

The rights of commonage as eſtabliſhed in England, although productive of no material advantage to the generality of thoſe poſſeſſing ſuch rights, operate moſt powerfully as a bar to the complete improvement of that otherwiſe fruitful country. Owing to the exerciſe of theſe rights by thoſe in poſſeſſion of them, many hundred thouſand acres of naturally productive lands are allowed to remain in a neglected ſtate, which, were they converted into private property, might be rendered to a very high degree productive.

Conſidering this ſubject in every way in which it is poſſible to view it, it will appear unqueſtionable, that permitting ſuch an extent of lands to continue to be occupied as commons is a national grievance of very great magnitude, and which ought on that account, and at all events, to be removed.

Before improvements in agriculture had made any great progreſs in Scotland, commons abounded as much in that kingdom as they ſtill do in England. The rights of commonage,

however, appears to have been ſomewhat different. In place of every cottager, who poſſeſſed a houſe on the edge of a common, having an unlimited right of commonage, as is now in general the caſe in England, the proprietors of the adjoining tillage-lands, or their tenants only, had right of paſturing their cattle on the intervening commons in Scotland. Beſides, it does not appear that, in the latter kingdom, lords of manors ever exerciſed their manorial rights ſo far as to demand, or if ſo, that they were entitled to, a fourth, an eighth, a twelfth, or a ſixteenth of the common for enfranchiſing the remainder. Theſe circumſtances, added to that important one of the payment of tithes in kind, having been previouſly aboliſhed, and the rights of the clergy aſcertained, paved the way for the paſſing of an act of parliament, whereby proprietors of eſtates, adjoining to commons in Scotland, acquired a right of forcing a diviſion of commonable land, by a ſimple and expeditious mode of procedure. This act of parliament, which was paſſed in the year 1665, is ſo extremely conciſe and explicit, that an Engliſh reader in particular will feel ſatisfaction from the peruſal of it; and the more ſo when he is informed that, in the courſe of 130 years, it has had the effect of rendering all the lands in Scotland property-lands. It is nearly as follows: "All commons, excepting thoſe belonging to the King in property, or royal burghs in

burgage, may be divided at the inſtance of any individual having intereſt, by ſummons raiſed againſt all parties concerned before the lords of ſeſſion (the ſupreme court of Scotland), who are empowered to diſcuſs the relevancy, to determine upon the rights of the parties concerned, to divide the ſame amongſt them, and to grant commiſſion for perambulating, and taking all other neceſſary probation, to be reported to the lords, and the proceſs to be ultimately determined by them. Declaring that the intereſt of the heritors, having right in the common, ſhall be eſtimated according to the valuation of their reſpective lands and properties; and that a portion be adjudged to each adjacent heritor in proportion to his property, with power to the lords to divide the moſſes, if any be in the common, among the parties having intereſt; or in caſe they cannot be divided, that they remain in common, with free iſh and entry whether divided or not."

Strange as it may appear, yet it is no leſs true than ſtrange, that ſeveral people have ſtarted objections againſt an arrangement of common rights in England, and ſeem to conſider any attempts towards it as little leſs than a violation of the conſtitution, or at leaſt of thoſe laws by which property in land is held. Theſe objections will be particularly taken notice of, when treating of a ſubject to which this is very nearly allied, viz. that of Open-field Lands.

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SECTION VIII.

Open-field Lands.

When giving an account of the manner in which the lands in England are employed or occupied, the ſyſtem of management adopted in the open-field pariſhes was fully deſcribed. From that deſcription, every reader muſt be ſatisfied that the open-field lands, which in ſome counties amount to above one third of the whole, are deficient in point of produce at leaſt one half, when compared with that of incloſed lands under proper management. That open or common field huſbandry is therefore an obſtruction to agriculture, muſt be generally allowed; and an obſtruction ſo ſerious in its nature, as to create a deficiency, on the ſuppoſition of there being one fourth part of the tillage-land in England in the open-field ſtate, of at leaſt one eighth of the marketable produce of the country. When this is ſtated, and when it is further added, that no proprietor or tenant of open-field lands can introduce any improvements in the modes of cropping or of general management, without the conſent of the pariſh community of which he is a member, and none that can be binding up-

on them without an act of parliament, the abſurdity of allowing lands to remain in the open-field ſtate muſt appear ſtill more glaring.

Some facts have been brought to light by means of the Board of Agriculture, which, in proof of theſe aſſertions, it may not be improper here to mention. The Report of the County of Buckingham contains the following ſtatement: "About eighteen years ago, the pariſhioners came to an agreement, and obtained an act, to lay the ſmall pieces of land together. *One farmer, at that period, had eighteen acres in thirty-one different pieces, and at wide diſtances from each other.* When the diviſion took place, the balks were of neceſſity ploughed up, by which a great portion of the ſheep paſture was deſtroyed. It became then expedient, and it was agreed upon at a public veſtry, to ſow clover and turnips as a *ſuccedaneum* for the balks. Two years ſince (that is, ſixteen years after this arrangement had taken place among the pariſhioners), one of the farmers, occupying ſixteen acres of theſe common fields, procured in the month of May a large flock of lean ſheep, which he turned on the clover crops, being then nearly in bloom, the greater part of which they devoured *." Another inſtance of the impoſſibility

* This unprincipled act will, in its ultimate conſequences, promote the intereſt of thoſe whom it was meant to injure;

as

lity of pariſhioners being able to arrange any mode by which improvements can be introduced, which individuals are bound to adhere to without the ſanction of parliament, is alſo detailed in the ſame report, and in the following words: "The pariſh of Steeple-Claydon contains two thouſand five hundred acres of ſtrong wet clay. The cuſtom is here, to have one crop and one fallow. About fourteen years ago the proprietors came to an agreement to have two crops and a fallow; but before the expiration of ten years, one of the farmers broke through the agreement, and turned in his cattle among the crops of beans, oats, and barley: in which plan he was ſoon followed by the reſt of his neighbours; and the crops on that part of the field, which, agreeable to the ancient cuſtom, would have been fallow, were in conſequence totally deſtroyed." Conſidering the immenſe national loſs ariſing from ſo great a portion of the cultivated and cultivateable lands in England remaining in the open-field and commonable ſtate, the great additional expence which farmers are liable to in cultivating lands diſperſedly ſituated, and the inferiority of crops reaped from

as the other proprietors, with a view of preventing ſuch abuſes for the future, have applied to parliament for leave to encloſe the whole; and which has been, or no doubt will ſoon be, obtained.

from lands, however good in quality, that are ſubjected to a never-ending rotation of corn crops, it is no wonder that the report of every county in that kingdom ſhould contain an earneſt ſolicitation to the members of the Board of Agriculture, to ſuggeſt ſuch meaſures as are moſt likely to receive the ſanction of the legiſlature, and to meet the approbation of all the parties concerned for removing obſtacles, which, while they are permitted to exiſt, muſt exclude the poſſibility of improving the agriculture of that country.

To arrange general equitable principles, on which manorial rights can be purchaſed, and commons divided and rendered private property, and on which likewiſe proprietors of pariſhes ſhall be at liberty to incloſe, and introduce new and better modes of huſbandry on their eſtates, are ſubjects of infinite importance to the future proſperity of England; and as ſuch call loudly for the immediate intervention of the legiſlature.

After ſtating and obviating the objections which have been ſtarted againſt the dividing of commons and the incloſing of pariſhes, and after pointing out the advantages that experience has in many inſtances proved to have reſulted from adopting theſe means of improvement, the writer ſhall beg leave to ſuggeſt what to him appears the moſt probable way in which they can be generally introduced.

The

The depopulation of the country, which is ſuppoſed a neceſſary conſequence of diviſions of commons, or incloſing of pariſhes, is held out as a grand objection againſt the general adoption of either of theſe meaſures. The fact, however, it appears from the Agricultural Reports, is quite the contrary; and to thoſe who attempt to argue againſt facts, it is unneceſſary to make any reply. Can thoſe meaſures tend to the depopulation of the country which have for their object the production, in greater abundance, of the means by which an increaſed population can be ſupported? Has not every farmer the power of cultivating his land to greater advantage when incloſed, or in ſeveralty, than when intermixed with that of others? Can any farmer cultivate his farm to the greateſt poſſible advantage without more than ordinary labour? Does not this neceſſarily require an additional number of labourers? To all theſe queſtions the anſwers muſt certainly be in the affirmative. It may be admitted, that the inhabitants of a pariſh muſt undergo a very material alteration in their ſituation in conſequence of its being incloſed; yet it does not follow that the depopulation of the country muſt be the conſequence. Though ſeveral of thoſe who occupy ſmall farms muſt neceſſarily be removed, in order to enable the proprietors to claſs the lands into farms of a proper ſize, it is equally obvious,

that

that a new ſet of people muſt be introduced; ſuch as hedgers, ditchers, road-makers, and labourers of every ſort. This may therefore be called an alteration in the deſcription of the inhabitants, a ſhifting of population from one pariſh to another, rather than an expulſion, or a decreaſe of the number of inhabitants in one particular pariſh. Were it evident, however, that depopulation was the conſequence of incloſing a pariſh, it will be found, that that depopulation does not ariſe from the circumſtance of the pariſh having been incloſed, but from the total alteration of ſyſtem that too commonly takes place in the after management of the lands. If the lands, in place of being laid down to graſs, as is the prevailing practice, were cultivated in an alternate courſe of grain and graſs huſbandry, the number of hands neceſſary for the cultivation, and for carrying on and following out the various improvements which in ſuch a caſe would be immediately introduced, would be at leaſt equal, if not greatly ſuperior, to that of the inhabitants at any period while it remained in the common or open field ſtate.

The next objection againſt the adoption of either of theſe meaſures is, the depriving the commoners of their rights of commonage. This philanthropic argument is apt, with the man of humanity, like Aaron's rod, to ſwallow up every other that can be urged in favour of the public, or

of the other individuals concerned. But let us pauſe a moment, and inquire what theſe rights are. It is preſumed, after the moſt minute inquiry, it will be found that the rights of commonage in England were, as in Scotland, veſted originally in the proprietors of the adjoining tillage lands; and that the now claimants of rights of commonage have acquired theſe rights, ſuch as they are, in almoſt every inſtance, through the negligence of the actual proprietors, who allowed theſe aſſumed rights to acquire the ſanction of law, in conſequence of preſcription. That this is the origin of common-rights in England, and that they are more common on the crown-lands, ariſing from the cauſe now aſſigned, "negligence," will not, the writer dares venture to aſſert, be denied. But they are rights; and "curſed be he that removes his neighbour's land mark," is a maxim that ought to be imprinted on the mind of every man. It does not, however, thence follow, that, to accommodate thoſe poſſeſſing rights of common, the public, or the principal proprietors, who would be benefited by a diviſion, ſhould ſacrifice their intereſt, ſhould allow the productive powers of theſe uncultivated waſtes to remain dormant, becauſe it is the inclination of thoſe who have thus acquired rights that they ſhould do ſo; far leſs does it follow, that, whether theſe rights have been acquired through legal indiſputable title, or

through the ſufferance of the proprietors of the adjoining eſtates, the owners of them cannot, on the diviſion of a common, get a full and fair equivalent in property land for their rights of commonage. Whoever would maintain this doctrine, would maintain that the laws of England were framed for the protection of the rights of the rich, but that the poor had no intereſt in them. The advantages derived by the cottagers, in virtue of theſe rights, are for the moſt part merely ideal; yet if ever a diviſion of the commons in England takes place, it will, for the reaſons formerly mentioned, become the indiſpenſable duty of the commiſſioners acting in ſuch caſes, both in point of humanity and ſound policy, to act liberally towards the cottager, and to give him an adequate allowance of property land for his preſcriptive rights. Commiſſioners ſo acting ought to conſider, that in a national view, whether A, B, or C are the proprietors of theſe commonable lands is a matter of no ſort of importance, provided they are once put in the train of improvement; and which can only be done by converting them into property. Theſe commiſſioners ought farther to conſider, that ſcarcely any ſum of money which they can award is an adequate compenſation for a cottager's right of common. The money may be ſoon diſſipated; but rights of paſturage, or lands in property, are funds more permanent in their natures.

When

When a poor cottager receives a piece of money in compenſation for his rights of commonage, which is but too frequently the caſe under pariſh incloſure bills, the funds which were allotted for the ſupport of his family are, as it were, ſet afloat; and it is a thouſand to one if they ſhall again ſettle on any friendly ſhore. It cannot, therefore, be too often repeated, that there is no compenſation a cottager can receive for his rights of commonage ſo juſt and equitable, or to him and his family ſo beneficial, as land in property.

Another objection to incloſing pariſhes, or to a diviſion of commons, is the expence of the act of parliament neceſſary to carry either of theſe meaſures into effect; and when completed, to make the arrangement binding upon the parties. This has been particularly taken notice of when deſcribing the ſtate of the roads in Great Britain. It is certainly mortifying to a proprietor of England, that he can ſcarcely adopt any plan for improving his eſtate without paying ſome hundred pounds to the clerks of parliament for doing nothing but regiſtering the edicts of the legiſlature; and for doing which, if they are not properly paid from the public funds, they at leaſt ought to be, ſo as to prevent them from levying a heavy tax on the more enterpriſing, public-ſpirited, and praiſe-worthy individuals of the community. Let litigious people, when they

make appeals to the ſupreme tribunal of the nation, pay what the avarice of the official people may dictate; but let every application for the interpoſition of the legiſlative authority to ſanction meaſures calculated to promote the proſperity and improvement of the country, be laid before Parliament without fee or reward.

The only other objection that ſhall be mentioned is, that if all the open-fields and improveable commons were brought into a proper ſtate of cultivation, it would materially affect the intereſt of the owners of the already improved lands. Such a narrow-minded ſentiment ought to be treated with ſilence and contempt, did it not prove, that thoſe who are capable of ſuggeſting it were ſatisfied that, however much individuals might ſuffer, the intereſt of the nation at large would be promoted, were every improveable acre in the iſland in a proper ſtate of cultivation. This being granted, it may be aſked, ought the intereſt of the public to be ſacrificed to promote that of a few individuals? But no apprehenſions need be entertained on that account. Although "trifles light as air" ſeem with ſuch reaſoners to have the weight of "words of holy writ", yet the judicious and intelligent muſt be convinced, that while the commerce of Britain keeps on in a progreſſive ſtate, there is no extent of ſuperabundant produce that can be

raiſed

raiſed in the iſland which will not meet a ready ſale in ſome foreign market.

With reſpect to the advantages to be derived from a general diviſion of the commons, and the incloſure of the open-field pariſhes in England, although they are numerous, the moſt important of them only ſhall be mentioned.

It is only in theſe countries where the means of ſubſiſtence can be had in abundance, and on reaſonable terms, that population increaſes with rapidity. In political calculations the riches of a ſtate are eſtimated by the number of its inhabitants. As theſe cannot increaſe to any conſiderable degree where the means of ſubſiſtence are limited, it is evident, that by adopting the meaſures above-mentioned, by which only a great addition can be made to the national ſtock of proviſions, the ſtate would become richer, as it would then be able to furniſh from its own lands the means of ſupporting an increaſed population. Beſides, were theſe meaſures adopted, it is obvious that the national territorial revenue would be to an immenſe degree augmented; that of England, in all probability, one-third at leaſt beyond what it is at preſent.

The following extract from the writer's Report of the County of Northampton will tend to elucidate this fact: "The average rent of an acre of open-field land in this diſtrict, including the value of the tithes, which may be reckoned

koned at three ſhillings and ſixpence the acre, may amount to eleven ſhillings and ſixpence; while that of an acre of incloſed land (including a ſimilar ſum for tithes) may be reckoned twenty ſhillings, which makes a difference of eight ſhillings and ſixpence the acre. There are eighty-nine pariſhes in this county in the open-field ſtate, which may contain nearly 150,000 acres. The rent which the proprietors therefore loſe, by keeping theſe pariſhes in the open-field ſtate, may be eſtimated at upwards of L 60,000 a-year; while at the ſame time the introduction of agricultural improvements is precluded, and conſequently an increaſe of rent on rational principles."

Beſides an increaſe of population, of the quantity and quality of grain, and of territorial revenue, the improvement of the different ſpecies of live-ſtock is another advantage which uniformly reſults from incloſing land. The farmer, no longer under the neceſſity of mixing his herds or his flocks with thoſe of others, is at liberty to purſue ſuch meaſures as he judges moſt expedient; and while he purchaſes tups, bulls, and ſtallions of the beſt ſorts, to improve his ſtock, he alſo takes care, by ſuperior cultivation, and a more judicious rotation of cropping than he was before at liberty to adopt, that they ſhall not be ſtinted in their growth by the want of provender.

Such

Such is the account of the advantages that are likely to reſult from a general diviſion of commons and the incloſure of open-fields, which the writer, from a careful peruſal of the agricultural reports of the different counties of England, and his own general knowledge of the ſubject, is able to lay before the reader. Experience having proved, in very many inſtances, that theſe, and ſeveral others of no inconſiderable importance, have actually reſulted, it muſt appear ſurpriſing that any peer of parliament ſhould ſtand up in his place and maintain an oppoſite doctrine; yet whoever peruſes the Parliamentary Regiſter for 1781, will find that this was the caſe.

Lord Bathurſt, in the beginning of that year, like a real patriot and friend of his country, gave notice in the houſe of peers, that he intended to make ſeveral propoſitions, in a committee of the whole houſe, on the ſubject of incloſures and the commutation of tithes. When theſe propoſitions were ſubmitted to the conſideration of that reſpectable aſſembly, the Biſhop of Landaff, now a member of the Board of Agriculture, aſſerted, that without regard to the waſte of land taken up in fences, &c. or of the expence of forming them, that incloſures were unfavourable to agriculture, and to the cultivation and produce of grain: That the crops in incloſures were ſubject to blights and mildews, as the trees in the hedge-rows excluded the ſun

and

and obſtructed the air: That trees and hedges were apt to generate vermin, and many evils of a ſimilar nature; whereas, in open-fields the crops were free from any ſuch attacks, and therefore found to be always more in quantity, and ſuperior in quality, to thoſe in incloſed lands. Although almoſt every report, preſented to the Board of Agriculture by the perſons employed to make the ſurveys of the different counties in England, ſtates, in the moſt decided terms, the advantage of incloſing; yet, in conſequence of ſuch arguments as theſe, this patriotic lord was obliged to withdraw his motion for a committee of the houſe. Were all the members of the Board of Agriculture to hold the ſame ſentiments on the ſubject of incloſing open-fields which this Right Reverend Prelate promulgated on the occaſion above-mentioned, it would augur ill as to the fate of the bill introduced into the laſt parliament by their reſpectable preſident. But it is hoped the contrary will be found to be the caſe; and that, by the exertions of that Honourable Board, ſuch of the proprietors of England as are now in a ſtate of thraldom, owing to theſe ancient laws and cuſtoms being continued in force, will be completely emancipated, and left at liberty to adopt, without controul, the moſt effectual meaſures for the improvement of their private property; which, by the bye, it is impoſſible for them to effect,

effect, without at the ſame time promoting the public intereſt.

To the nature of the bill above alluded to the writer is an entire ſtranger; but it does not occur to him that, without effecting arrangements with the parties to be moſt materially affected by its eſtabliſhment, it is ever likely to meet general approbation, or indeed to paſs into a law. To introduce a bill into parliament with effect, that is intended to facilitate either a general incloſure or a general diviſion of commonable lands, ſeveral previous important ſteps are neceſſary to be taken. The clergy, the lords of manors, including the crown and thoſe poſſeſſing common rights, although their intereſts are ſeparate, and in ſome degree oppoſite to each other, muſt all be materially intereſted in the fate of ſuch a bill. Had a commutation of tithes been effected, the terms on which manorial rights, whether royal or private, could have been purchaſed, aſcertained, and the proper mode of allocating property-land, in place of rights of commonage, determined. A general incloſure bill would have paſſed without oppoſition, *becauſe no private party would have had right to oppoſe it;* but the perſon who propoſes paſſing a general incloſure bill, without theſe previous arrangements, muſt expect to encounter a hoſt of foes; and if theſe ſhould prove too powerful, as will in all probability be the caſe, the period

may yet be far diſtant when this ſtable foundation for the general agricultural improvement of England can be laid. The preſident and the other members of the Board of Agriculture, if they have any ſerious intention of bringing forward a general incloſure bill, will therefore do well to make the neceſſary previous arrangements. Should they inconſiderately adopt an oppoſite line of conduct, the conſequences will neither be honourable to themſelves nor advantageous to the community.

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SECTION IX.

Thirlage to Mills.

THE erection of water-mills for grinding corn muſt no doubt have been conſidered in Scotland, at the period when all ſorts of grain were converted into meal by means of hand-mills of very imperfect conſtruction, as a great improvement. When water-mills were firſt erected, two or more neighbouring proprietors uſually became bound that their tenants ſhould pay to the proprietor who erected the mill, and to his heirs and ſucceſſors for ever, a certain portion of the grain carried to the mill for the trouble of manufacturing the remainder; and further, that neither they nor their tenants ſhould be at liberty to manufacture any of their corns at other mills, without paying the accuſtomed multure for the corns ſo abſtracted from that particular mill. This was perhaps the only method that could have been deviſed at the time, by which water-mills could have been generally erected. Theſe arrangements did not probably operate as a heavy burden on the proprietors or farmers who firſt ſubjected themſelves to ſuch obligations, as at that period the cultivation of grain was comparatively very

limited. Beſides, it may be reaſonably inferred that the work was much better performed by theſe mills of modern invention, and with much greater advantage to the owner of the corn, than by thoſe that were formerly in uſe. The increaſe of population, and conſequently of tillage lands, has, however, rendered that which, at its eſtabliſhment, was very likely an equitable arrangement, now a very heavy tax on many farmers, and extremely haraſſing to all who are ſubjected to ſuch bondage.

As nothing is a greater ſpur to induſtry than a free and unlimited diſpoſal of its fruits to the beſt advantage; ſo, on the other hand, nothing can diſcourage it more than reſtrictions and limitations which become real fetters upon induſtry. In conſequence of this ſervitude, the tenant cannot carry his corns to market when a good price offers; he muſt neceſſarily carry them to the mill to which he is thirled to be grinded, and where they are ſubjected to a very ſevere tax under the name of multure. This tax at ſome mills amounts to a twentieth, at others to a fifteenth, and at ſome to a tenth, part of the whole; beſides which they muſt ſatisfy the under millers or ſervants for their trouble. Temptation is a great enemy to honeſty; and although it would be extremely improper to impute blame to all, or to a majority of the farmers of mills in Scotland; yet, if common fame is to

be credited, the opportunities which the miller and his ſervants have to commit frauds ſometimes lead them beyond the limits of ſtrict juſtice; ſometimes lead them, according to the old proverb, to "multure twice." In ſhort, this ſervitude, ſo haraſſing in its nature, has been long felt and loudly complained of, but hitherto without redreſs, except in ſome particular inſtances where the holders of ſuch rights have, from motives of patriotiſm, commuted them for a fair equitable conſideration in money. Without any violation of private property, it would be eaſy for the legiſlature to fix an equitable rule, by which the proprietors of lands, thirled to particular mills, ſhould have it in their power to purchaſe the right of grinding the corns growing on their eſtates at any mill they pleaſe, or of ſelling them, before they were converted into meal, as beſt ſuited their intereſt or that of their tenants *.

It does not appear that this ſpecies of ſervitude is at all known in England, at leaſt none of the agricultural reports of that kingdom make any mention of it. That of the County of Wilts takes notice of water-mills as being in many inſtances exceedingly injurious to water-meadows; and in the ſame report the following remedy is ſuggeſted: "In all acts of parliament for incloſures,

* See the Scots Farmer, vol. i. p. 297.

ſures, where there is a poſſibility of making water-meadows, or of improving thoſe already made, power ſhould be given to the commiſſioners to take from the mills, at ſtated times, all or ſuch part of the water as ſhould be abſolutely neceſſary for the water-meadows below; and where ſuch mills are really unneceſſary, to direct them to be taken away. Such commiſſioners being at the ſame time empowered to fix an annual rent-charge, to be paid to the owners of ſuch mills ſo injured by the owners of the land ſo benefited, as is done in the caſe of canals, ſubject to the like appeal as is allowed in canal acts. In parts of the country which are already incloſed, diſputes frequently happen between owners of mills and owners of water-meadows, and which are almoſt impoſſible to be explained or underſtood in a court of juſtice. Perhaps a mode might be practicable, of empowering juſtices of the peace, at their quarter-ſeſſions, to order a reference to men of judgment in the neighbourhood, and to make their award matter of record to bind the parties."

Mr Marſhall, in his Rural Economy of the Weſt of England, alſo makes mention of the ancient rights of water-mills being bars to the improvement of that part of the country, by preventing the watering of meadows. If the watering of land ſhall be found a beneficial practice in Scotland, the immenſe number of water-

water-mills in that kingdom muſt neceſſarily prove an unſurmountable bar to the general introduction of it; and if ever the period ſhall happen when the legiſlature ſhall turn its attention to the removal of thirlage as a grievance on the farmers of that country, it may be highly proper to keep in view the poſſibility of improving the lands adjoining to the mill-leads or water courſes, by means of watering or flooding them at pleaſure.

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SECTION X.

The Game-Laws.

THESE operate powerfully againſt the farmer; they give to a few opulent individuals a power of doing miſchief, *which the legiſlators of no country have a right to diſpenſe*, and which in this is found to be a real grievance. What right has His Grace, My Lord, Sir John, or the Squire, to gallop over this field of new ſown wheat, or that field of cole, or of turnips, the property of another? The anſwer is, He is warranted by law. True; but will any perſon pretend to deny that ſuch laws are made for the *deſtruction*, not the *protection*, of private property? The practice of hunting is very injurious to farmers; the winter corn in wet ſituations, and turnips in all, are often much damaged by the horſes; the fences are alſo broken, and gates left open; whereby different ſpecies of ſtock get mixed together, and in numerous inſtances commit treſpaſſes *. It is well known that ſportſmen pay no regard to fences, or to crops of any kind; and if a farmer, who ſuffers material injury from the commiſſion

* See the Report of the North Riding of Yorkſhire.

miſſion of ſuch depredations dares to complain, eſpecially if he is a tenant at will, his removal is the conſequence; at any rate, he is branded with the character of a turbulent fellow. And why? Becauſe, while he ſees a number of men on horſeback doing an act of manifeſt injuſtice, committing devaſtation on his property, which in this caſe the law of the land does not protect, he dares to remonſtrate againſt proceedings which ought not to be tolerated in any country where it is the boaſt of the inhabitants that laws are enacted ſufficient for the protection of individual property. It was ſtated by the chancellor of the exchequer, towards the cloſe of the laſt parliament, that the game-laws of this country were ſubjects of the moſt delicate nature, and on that account ought to be as little agitated as poſſible. They were no doubt felt as a real grievance by the great body of the people in a neighbouring country, and tended, along with other grievous circumſtances, to bring on that dreadful cataſtrophe which has recently happened. It would therefore be prudent in the executive government of theſe kingdoms to make ſuch alterations as would render the game-laws leſs exceptionable; that would prevent the poſſibility of private property being injured under the ſanction of law. For it muſt be univerſally acknowledged, that any law that gives to A the power of demoliſhing the proper-

ty of B is unjuſt in its principle, and oppreſſive and grievous in its conſequences: and that this is the caſe, in regard to the game-laws, is a fact that there is ſcarcely a farmer in the iſland who cannot, from woeful experience, atteſt.

Such are the obſtacles to the improvement of the country, which cannot be removed without the intervention of the legiſlature. Of theſe the following more particularly affect England:

1*ſt*, The payment of tithes in kind.

2*dly*, The poor's laws, whereby the merchant, the manufacturer, and the moneyed men, are exempted from paying a due proportion of the expence neceſſary for ſupporting thoſe who have grown old, or who have met with accidents, in their ſervice.

3*dly*, Cuſtomary tenure, by which the holders of particular eſtates are not only in ſome inſtances ſubjected to the performance of degrading ſervices, but in conſequence of being liable in the payment of eventual fines (which riſe in proportion to the improvements that have been made), they are rendered leſs attentive to the due cultivation of their property.

4*thly*, The crown-lands, which under the exiſting circumſtances, are of no value to the country; but which, if ſold and converted into private property, as they are capable of very great improvement, would in time furniſh immenſe additional ſupplies to the public markets.

5*thly*,

5*thly*, Church-lands, and lands in poſſeſſion of corporations, whether civil or religious. The holders of ſuch lands require to be laid under legal reſtrictions in regard to granting leaſes, ſo that thoſe who farm them may have a more permanent intereſt in the improvements which, by the expenditure of labour and money, they may have effected.

6*thly*, Commons and common rights are great nuiſances, as preventing the improvement of numerous extenſive tracts of otherwiſe very improveable land.

7*thly*, Open-field lands. One of the greateſt bars to the improvement of England, and which cannot be removed till the proprietors of eſtates ſo ſituated ſhall acquire a legal right to compel a diviſion and arrangement, on ſuch principles as to enable each to introduce modes of improvement independent of the others.

8*thly*, The game-laws. Theſe ought to be new-modelled, in ſo far at leaſt as to ſecure private and individual property.

The obſtacles which affect the agriculture of Scotland are few, and being leſs complex than many of thoſe before ſtated, the legiſlature could find little difficulty in removing.

1*ſt*, The now too common practice of entailing eſtates; by which means the holders, in place of being independent proprietors, anxious for the improvement of their paternal properties,

are reduced to the ſtate of liferenters, regardleſs in general of the improvement of eſtates which may in a generation or two devolve on a different ſeries of heirs; and precluded by the tenor of the deeds under which they hold from granting leaſes on ſuch liberal terms as to induce ſubſtantial and ſpirited farmers to undertake improvements.

2*dly*, Thirlage to mills is a grievance both loudly and generally complained of, but which might be eaſily aboliſhed, and on the moſt equitable terms, viz. on payment of a reaſonable number of years purchaſe of what ſhall be proved to be the value of ſuch ſervitude.

3*dly*, The game-laws, which, owing to the general lateneſs of the harveſt, and that partridge-ſhooting commences ſo early, are attended with more haraſſing circumſtances there than in England.

From this review of the legal bars that obſtruct the agricultural improvement of this iſland, how enviable does the ſituation of the proprietors and farmers in Scotland appear beyond that of thoſe in England? The free and uncontrouled command of their eſtates, which the Scotch proprietors (thoſe only excepted who hold under deeds of entail) poſſeſs, gives them ample opportunities of adopting every meaſure that prudence dictates as likely to tend towards the improvement of their property, and which thoſe particularly

particularly who poſſeſs lands ſouth of the Grampian mountains have for ſome years evinced the moſt laudable diſpoſition to adopt. While the farmers, exempted from the payment of tithes in kind, of exceſſive poor's rates, and having complete command of the farms, which they poſſeſs without conſtant appeals to pariſh meetings, may, and in general do, cultivate them in peace, and in a manner the moſt conducive to their own and to the public intereſt.

Theſe obſtacles to the improvement of both kingdoms, ſome of which are extremely ſerious, and ſo complicated in their nature as muſt render it difficult to remove them, have naturally grown out of that change in the circumſtances of all worldly things which is perpetually, but imperceptibly, taking place; whereby regulations and laws, that might very probably have been highly proper at the periods when they were framed and enacted, have in the courſe of time become real grievances, and ſuch as operate moſt powerfully, not only againſt the general improvement of the country, but alſo againſt the peace, comfort, and well-being, of ſociety. It muſt therefore be admitted by every impartial perſon as highly improper in any government to adhere to ſyſtems of police beyond the period when a ſtrict adherence to them is uſeful to the communuty, far leſs when the doing ſo is evidently attended with pernicious conſequences. It would

certainly be more wiſe and becoming in the legiſlators of every country to watch the changes that take place in the manners of mankind, and in the order of things; and to guard, by gradual alterations of the exiſting laws, in time againſt ſubjecting the ſtate to any violent ſhock or convulſion. They ought to attend to what Lord Bacon very judiciouſly obſerves, "Time (ſays his Lordſhip) is the greateſt innovator; and if time of courſe alter things to the worſe, and wiſdom and council ſhall not alter them to the better, what ſhall be the end? A froward retention of cuſtom is as turbulent a thing as an innovation, and they that reverence too much old times are but a ſcorn to the new."

Reform, or, as Lord Bacon ſtyles it, innovation, is in theſe times, the writer well knows, an opprobrious term. In queſtions merely political the friends and enemies of reform may battle as they pleaſe; but he conſiders it a duty which every man writing on the ſubject of Britiſh agriculture owes to that community of which he is a member, to point out ſuch alterations of the exiſting laws as appear indiſpenſably neceſſary, in order, not only to effect the further improvement of the country, but in order alſo to procure that ſupply of the neceſſaries of life within itſelf; without which the inhabitants cannot exiſt, unleſs through a conſtant, although a precarious, dependence on foreign nations.

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SECTION XI.

Obſtacles in the Power of Proprietors to Remove.

It has been made evidently to appear, not only in the former ſections of this chapter, but alſo in the preceding part of this volume, that there are many obſtacles which, without the interpoſition of the legiſlature, muſt ever remain obſtacles to the general improvement of the country. There are others alſo, and ſome of them productive of very bad conſequences, which the proprietors have in their power to remove. Theſe ſhall be explained in the following pages.

The want of leaſes, as being moſt generally complained of, firſt demands notice; and under that general head may be included every particular which requires the landlord's attention in regard to thoſe obſtacles that fall to their ſhare individually to remove. There are ſcarcely any of the Agricultural Reports of England or Wales in which the want of leaſes is not ſtated as next to the payment of tithes in kind, the greateſt grievance which the generality of farmers labour under. This complaint, it is true, does not hold good againſt the proprietors

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of Scotland in general; nevertheleſs there are numerous inſtances, particularly in the northern provinces, where proprietors withhold from their tenants that permanent ſecurity of poſſeſſion, by granting which alone the lands can be moſt expeditiouſly and moſt ſubſtantially improved *.

Here

* While the great proprietors of the north of Scotland continue the practice of raiſing regiments at the commencement of every war, it is not to be ſuppoſed they will ever act ſo abſurd a part as to enter into arrangements with their tenants whereby they can acquire any ſhare of independence. Such arrangements would operate materially againſt their intereſts; for they can make more in ſome years *of the gleanings of the men on their eſtates* than by the ſale of the produce of the ſoil, had they a right to bring the whole to market. We are frequently told at the commencement of a war, that a proprietor in the north of Scotland raiſed a regiment of fine young *volunteers* in the courſe of a week or ten days. Every reader may infer what means were uſed to effect this buſineſs ſo quickly, eſpecially in a country where the uſe of arms is in a great meaſure unknown. Were it aſked, What becomes of this devoted race? The anſwer would be, They are ſold to the Britiſh Miniſter, not indeed as a *free-born German Prince* would do, at ſo much *per* head, but at ſo much *per annum*; that is, the laird and the laird's couſins become captains, majors, colonels, generals, &c. *Thrice happy country, may not an Engliſhman exclaim*, where ſuch characters bear ſway! How flouriſhing muſt be its trade and manufactures? How improved its agriculture?

Here it may be right to remark, that there are two deſcriptions of landholders whom, owing to the circumſtances in which they are placed, it would be improper to include as liable to the general cenſure, that every thinking perſon will readily agree is applicable to thoſe who, acting as free agents, yet continue to hold their tenants in a ſtate of dependence little ſhort of what took place during the exiſtence of the feudal ſyſtem. Thoſe who may be from time to time in poſſeſſion of the lands that have been aſſigned to the church in frankalmoign, or free alms, are either from long eſtabliſhed cuſtom, or exiſting laws, the writer knows not which, prevented from granting leaſes of proper endurance, or on ſuch terms as can prevent the tenants from being compelled at ſhort intervals to pay in advance of rent a very heavy tax on their former induſtry. In either caſe, however, although the accidental holders of ſuch lands are not blameable in this reſpect, yet the intervention of the legiſlature, if the complete improvement of the country be with it a deſirable object, ſeems indiſpenſably neceſſary. The holders of theſe lands for the time, ought not only to be empowered, but enjoined, to grant leaſes of ſuch duration as to enable the farmers to reap the returns that may be fairly expected from the expenditure of ſuch ſums as are in common neceſſary for effecting the introduction of improved modes of huſban-

dry. "For (in the words of the writer of the Eſſex Report) as the clergy are now circumſtanced, no permanent improvements are attempted; the land lies half cultivated, and ſeems in almoſt every pariſh, by the unexampled poverty of its appearance, to plead for better treatment."

The other deſcription of landholders that ought to be exempted from any blame ariſing from the dependent ſtate of their tenantry, are thoſe who poſſeſs entailed eſtates; they are in many inſtances as dependent as their tenants, holding on their own lives only, and galled, probably through a great part of life, with the mortifying reflection, that at their death a numerous family of daughters, who, when their patrimony is compared with the ſtation in which they were educated, are to be left in a ſtate of indigence.

The writer is aware that this ſubject has been already twice under review. It is introduced here with a view of obviating an objection, which thoſe who favour this remain of the feudal ſyſtem may be apt to urge againſt the general and unqualified cenſure which he has beſtowed upon the practice of entailing eſtates. It may be urged by ſome, that an act of parliament was paſſed ſome years ago for enlarging the powers of thoſe holding entailed eſtates in Scotland, whereby they were not only empowered to grant leaſes of longer endurance than the original entailer had determined to be the rule of his ſucceſſor's conduct, but alſo, that

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thoſe holders who expended money on the permanent improvement of ſuch eſtates, when done according to the rules, and under the limitations expreſſed in that act, ſhould have a title to deviſe to their younger children, or to their heirs at law, a portion of the money ſo expended, and which was by that act made recoverable from the heir of entail. Some beneficial conſequences have unqueſtionably reſulted from the paſſing of this act, as ſince that period leaſes of entailed lands have in many inſtances been procured on more liberal terms, in point of endurance, than was previouſly thereto practicable. But in few inſtances have proprietors of this deſcription expended money with any degree of liberality on the improvement of their eſtates, and in fewer ſtill have they taken the proper meaſures to ſubſtantiate, in terms of the act above alluded to, the manner in which ſuch money has been expended, ſo that any others, excepting the heir of entail, could reap the benefit. In ſhort, as they have not themſelves a permanent intereſt in the property, it is not to be expected they will take much trouble to ſecure to their tenants that which, without an alteration of the law, they cannot obtain to themſelves. Nor are they in any degree blameable. A man that has been for ſeveral years confined in chains, becomes ſo habituated to the galling yoke as to conſider it rather an appendage of his dreſs than an incum-

brance which he is compelled to ſubmit patiently to drag along.

In particular inſtances, it muſt be admitted, circumſtances ſometimes do occur, wherein it would be wrong for proprietors, or thoſe acting for them, to leaſe eſtates, however completely they may poſſeſs the power of doing ſo. It may, in many caſes, be improper, for inſtance, to leaſe the eſtate of a minor when nearly come of age, and equally ſo when there is an immediate view of the eſtate being ſold; but theſe particular caſes do not apply to the ſubject in general.

It is well known that lands let on leaſes of moderate endurance (21 years, for inſtance) give in common 25 *per cent.* of more rent than thoſe of the ſame quality held from year to year. The proprietors, who are in the uncontrouled management of their eſtates, ought therefore to conſider that the want of leaſes operates as an inſurmountable bar to the general introduction of improvements, or to carrying on the various operations of agriculture with ſpirit and effect. That man would certainly be juſtly ſubjected to the reproach of being raſh and inconſiderate in his conduct, who would expend money and labour on the improvement of any farm, where his certainty of continuance does not entitle him to look forward with a confident aſſurance to the period when his exertions were to be rewarded. It is a well known fact, that the hope of reward

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ſweetens labour; take that away, and the ſpur to labour neceſſarily ceaſes. It is that alone that calls forth induſtry, and is the ſpring of all exertion. What object then can a farmer have to hazard his capital, and devote the moſt vigorous and active part of his life to the improvement of a farm which he holds on no more certain tenure than the will, or, in other words, than the whim or caprice of his landlord? In every ſuch ſituation, the *prudent* farmer muſt be reſtrained from any ſpirited expenditure, however much he may be ſatisfied that the improvements, which might thereby be effected, would, under other circumſtances, prove beneficial to the public, the landlord, and himſelf. Have not, it may again be aſked, inſtances occurred, where tenants ſo circumſtanced have been obliged *repeatedly* to agree to pay an advance of rent rather than remove; while, from the uncertainty of the tenure on which they held their farms, they were debarred from making thoſe exertions which an advance of rent demanded, and which almoſt uniformly take place in ſuch caſes when leaſes are granted? The writer knows they have*.

"We have heard (ſay the very intelligent reporters of the State of Agriculture of the County of Cumberland), it is true, ſome arguments

* See his Report of Northamptonſhire.

ments urged in favour of letting no leaſes, which we are perſuaded cannot long take hold of any liberal and benevolent mind, enlightened by ſcience, or anxious to promote the true intereſts of the country." What theſe are theſe gentlemen have not detailed. They are, however, well known to the writer; and, without entering into a minute diſcuſſion of particulars, one only, as being that which he has heard moſt frequently urged, ſhall be mentioned; namely, "that granting leaſes tends to render the farmers not only independent but ſometimes inſolent." How abſurd! Do ſuch reaſoners ſuppoſe, that becauſe a man acquires, by being in poſſeſſion of a leaſe, a more independent mode of thinking or of acting, that he becomes the worſe farmer or member of ſociety? The very reverſe will uniformly be found the caſe. By acquiring a permanent intereſt in his farm, he has every incentive to become a good farmer; and his being ſo renders him of courſe more independent in point of fortune: that being the caſe, he is naturally led to be more and more anxious for the ſupport and preſervation of that conſtitution, and of that ſyſtem of government, by which the property ſo acquired can be beſt protected. View, on the other hand, the ſituation of theſe (a great majority of the farmers in Great Britain) who hold their farms at the will of their landlords; and then let it be aſked which of the

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two deſcriptions of tenants, thoſe who have or thoſe who have not leaſes, are likely to be the moſt uſeful, and in every point of view the beſt members of the community?

It has been often ſaid, that the liberty enjoyed by the farmer, and the ſecurity afforded by the conſtitution to his property, were the principal cauſes why agriculture flouriſhed more in this iſland than in other nations. Let us inquire wherein conſiſts the liberty enjoyed by the farmer who ſits without a leaſe? His words and actions are under the moſt abſolute ſubjection to another, who carries along with him a never-failing argument upon all occaſions. Let the abject ſituation of ſuch a man, placed under a capricious landlord, be conſidered; his beſt actions may be miſinterpreted, he is expoſed to every indignity without daring to complain; or if the ſpirit of a man gets up in him, what ſecurity does the conſtitution afford to his ſituation? If he has made improvements, the fruits of them are wreſted from him by an arbitrary removal; another farm cannot always be got, and he may be turned upon the wide world without the hopes of redreſs. A prudent man will reflect upon theſe things, and if he be ſo critically ſituated, will often rather part with his natural rights than expoſe himſelf to miſery. He may have a numerous family; his farm may be doing well with him; he may have contracted an affection

for his native ſoil, and be uncertain, if he makes a change, how he is next to be put up. This picture might be ſtill higher coloured; but from the above it may be contended, that the want of a leaſe precludes the farmer from acting as a free agent, and renders his property inſecure and precarious *.

It would be extremely deſirable to aſcertain the period which the Britiſh farmers, throwing their joint intereſts as it were into one common ſtock, have in regard to permanency of poſſeſſion. This it is impoſſible to do with any degree of accuracy; but in order, in ſome meaſure, to elucidate the point, the following ſtatement, which on inveſtigation might probably be found near the truth, is ſubmitted to the reader's review:

Three-fifths of the land-rent of Great Britain may be ſuppoſed paid by tenants holding at the will of their landlords; that is, for	½ year.
One-fifth by tenants, the original endurance of whoſe leaſes was for 7 and 14 years—medium	10½ years.
Carried over	11 years.

Brought

* See the Agricultural Report of the Weſt-Riding of Yorkſhire.

Brought over	11 years.
One-fifth by thoſe who hold leaſes, that from the commencement endure * - -	19 years.
Divide by 5 -	30
Average term of endurance	6 years.

By this ſtatement, ſurpriſing as it may appear, and however fortunately ſome individuals may be ſituated in reſpect to their enjoying by leaſe a more permanent intereſt in the lands they poſſeſs, yet the great body of the Britiſh farmers have not, on a medium, and on the moſt favourable view of the ſubject, above ſix years in which they can look forward with ſecurity to reap a return for money expended, or labour beſtowed, in improving the Britiſh ſoil. If, again, allowance is made for a great proportion of the exiſting leaſes being nearly in whole, or at leaſt in part, expired, four years may be nearer the general average. In no event is it probable, that the farmers of theſe kingdoms, as a body, have

* There are ſome inſtances of leaſes on lives in England that continue in force for a much longer period. In Scotland alſo there are ſome eſtates and farms let for two, and a few for three times nineteen years. But theſe inſtances are not numerous enough to be brought into ſo general a ſtatement, nor would they make any material difference in the reſult if they were.

a legal conventional right to retain poſſeſſion of their farms for five years. If ſo, and that the improvement of the country is looked for at their hands, it follows, that this uſeful and induſtrious claſs of men are to expend their capitals, to devote their time and attention, and to uſe every poſſible exertion in introducing improvements, and new and better modes of huſbandry, on a leaſe of five years duration. Yet this is actually the caſe; for although, as has been remarked before, a certain proportion of the Britiſh farmers enjoy leaſes framed on more liberal principles, the above, in a national view, is the deduction that falls to be made from the preceding ſtatement.

This perhaps may be deemed a new mode of calculating the duration of leaſes, or the extent of period in which the farmers can be ſuppoſed to have intereſt in the improvements they make on the national territory; but there is perhaps no better method by which the abſurdity of the conduct of a majority of thoſe proprietors, who may be fairly ſaid to have a will of their own, could have been made at once ſo clear, nor any by which the dependent ſtate of that truly reſpectable and uſeful claſs of men, the Britiſh farmers, could have been made more apparent.

Let the writers of paragraphs for the public newſpapers, and the general declaimers in taverns and coffee-houſes, write and ſay what they pleaſe

pleaſe againſt the inactivity and the want of exertion of this meritorious claſs; but the man of cool reflection will feel aſtoniſhment that, conſidering the circumſtances in which they are placed, they have done ſo much, rather than that they have allowed any thing to remain unaccompliſhed.

How different is the ſituation of the merchant or the manufacturer beſides that of the farmer. If the former are fair and honourable in their dealings, they meet with no obſtruction in their career. There is no man can ſay to them, "Unleſs you will allow me to participate in your profits, I will turn you out of that line of buſineſs in which they have been acquired."—No. From the period in which they reſpectively commence buſineſs till the day of their death, they go on in the uninterrupted enjoyment of the fruits of their induſtry, without any perſon pretending a right of participation.

Suppoſe twenty-eight years the age at which merchants and manufacturers in general enter into buſineſs for themſelves. M. Buffon ſtates, that a man at twenty-eight years of age poſſeſſes a reaſonable probability of living 29 years. By the preceding ſtatement, the Britiſh farmers, according to the preſent arrangement, cannot poſſeſs a farm above ſix years, without making, or, at any rate, being liable to be called

Brought over	29 years
upon to make, new arrangements with their landlords, by which a portion of the fruits of their former induſtry ſhall be aſſigned to them, or at leaſt that theſe ſhall be in future curtailed - - - - -	6 years
Difference in favour of the merchant and manufacturer, and againſt the farmer continuing to enjoy uninterruptedly the fruits of his own induſtry	23 years

But let us carry the compariſon a little further, and it will be diſcovered that, owing to the ſyſtem of policy eſtabliſhed and acted upon by the executive government of Great Britain, the merchant and manufacturer are favoured in an eſpecial manner beyond the farmer.

1*ſt*, While the legiſlature, ever vigilant, ever anxious, to extend the commerce, and to ſpread the manufactures of this country over almoſt every part of the habitable globe, the Britiſh farmers are limited in the ſale of grain, the chief article they can bring to market; *the price muſt be kept moderate for the accommodation of the manufacturers.*

2*d*, During the intervals of peace, and while the demand for manufactures is great, the country is drained of uſeful hands. When a war breaks out, and a ſtagnation takes place in the manufactures, the hands, then no longer neceſſary, are ſent back to the country to be maintained

tained at the farmer's expence. In proof of this it may be obſerved, that it is not uncommon for a farmer, who rents land to the extent of a L. 100, to pay more towards the ſupport of the poor in time of war than the merchant or manufacturer, who are in the annual receipt of perhaps L. 1000 a-year of clear profit.

3*d*, Who have not heard merchants complain of the hardſhip of being ſubjected to the viſitation of exciſe-officers? Is not the annual viſitation of the clergy, when collecting their tithes in kind, more oppreſſive on the farmers? In the former caſe, the inſolence of office can only be complained of, becauſe the conſumer is obliged to refund the money paid to the officers of the crown as part of the public revenue. In the latter, although the viſitation is conducted for the moſt part with more decorum and propriety, yet what is the reſult? A heavy tax is levied on the induſtry of the farmer, who, in regard to reimburſement, is left without recourſe, except in ſo far as the landlord's demand in time of peace is on that account ſomewhat more moderate.

It is unneceſſary to go into a further detail to ſatisfy every reader, that in many very eſſential particulars the ſituation of the farmer is not only greatly inferior to that of the merchant or the manufacturer, but that it is in fact ſuch as, without ſeveral important alterations are made

both by the legiſlature and the proprietors, it is abſurd, on ſolid principles, to expect that improvements in agriculture will ever be generally introduced. Perhaps the beſt evidence that can be adduced to prove the truth of this aſſertion is, to call the reader's attention to the extent of ſucceſs that *even in theſe improving days* is found to attend the exertions of thoſe who practice the art of huſbandry. While the obſervant man, who feels pleaſure in ſeeing the labours of the induſtrious in any profeſſion liberally rewarded, has the ſatisfaction to ſee the merchant and the manufacturer, in numerous inſtances, retiring from the hurry and buſtle of the world to enjoy in peace and comfort the well-earned fruits of their attention and aſſiduity in early life, he muſt regret that ſo few occur where the farmer, although in all probability as attentive, as aſſiduous, and as uſeful a member of ſociety, can ſit down in undiſturbed quiet and repoſe in the fag-end of his days. Some farmers, it will be acknowledged, owing to their having made fortunate purchaſes of land, or by having traded largely in corn or cattle, have riſen into affluence; but theſe are accidental circumſtances, and may be conſidered as connected rather with the buſineſs of a merchant than with that of a farmer. In ſhort, while, on the one hand, it is not uncommon to ſee a merchant or a manufacturer who commenced buſineſs with

with a very trifling, perhaps with no capital, acquire in a few years a handſome fortune; it is, on the other, very ſingular indeed to ſee a farmer, who very probably originally poſſeſſed ten times the ſtock, that from the exerciſe of his profeſſion only has, even in the courſe of a long life, been able to acquire what the others, with very moderate ideas in regard to a competency, would be ſatisfied with.

There muſt therefore be cauſes that tend as powerfully towards the ſucceſs of the former as againſt that of the latter, or ſuch a great and almoſt uniform difference in the ultimate balance of accounts could not, in every part of theſe kingdoms, have been for ages ſo apparent. Theſe cauſes have been in ſo far taken notice of; and the proprietors refuſing, or not having it in their power, to grant leaſes of proper duration is not the leaſt important. It is well known, that in every diſtrict where improvements have been ſucceſsfully and extenſively carried on, leaſes were previouſly granted, and every other proper and reaſonable encouragement alſo given to the tenants. It is equally well known, that where the mode of letting lands on leaſe has been introduced, the proprietors have, in every inſtance, found it for their intereſt to purſue the ſame plan. They found, from experience, that the tenants, feeling themſelves poſſeſſed of an intereſt in the improve-

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ment of the ſoil, of courſe beſtowed every degree of attention on that as their principal object. Hence the landlords, at the expiration of the original leaſes, conſidering themſelves juſtly entitled to derive a fair advantage from the exertion, enterpriſe, and aſſiduity of the former tenants, which was excited in conſequence of the aſſurance given them of poſſeſſing the farm for a ſpecified number of years, demanded, and received, an additional rent.

In concluding this, which to ſome may appear an unintereſting ſubject, although really extremely important, it may not be improper to obſerve, that the Legiſlature, the Board of Agriculture, and the proprietors of the country, may adopt what meaſures in their wiſdom may appear the moſt likely to effect the improvement of the national territory; but unleſs they go to the root of the evil, unleſs they adopt ſuch meaſures as will tend to place the Britiſh farmers in a more comfortable ſituation, and more on a footing with the merchants and manufacturers, the object will not be attained. Give them, but to a proper extent, a permanent intereſt in the fields they cultivate, and improvements in agriculture will rapidly enſue.

Beſides granting leaſes, other circumſtances require to be attended to by ſuch proprietors who, anxious for the general improvement of the country, may have adopted, or are deſirous

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to adopt, the laudable reſolution of contributing thereto by the introduction of new and better modes on that portion of it which has fallen to their ſhare. Theſe may be compriſed under the following heads:

Improper covenants in leaſes, and the period of duration beſt calculated to promote the intereſt of all parties.

The ſize of farms in ſome inſtances operate againſt the general improvements of the country.

The modes uſually adopted for letting farms, ſome of which are extremely reprehenſible.

The ſpecies of rent that ought to be ſtipulated in place of perſonal ſervices, &c.

The propriety of increaſing, or at leaſt of not decreaſing, the farmer's capital.

Improper covenants in leaſes, and the period of duration beſt calculated to promote the intereſt of all parties.—Copies of leaſes the beſt adapted, in the writer's apprehenſion, to enſure a ſmall ſhare of independence to the farmers, and conſequently the moſt likely to excite a general ſpirit for improvement, have already been laid before the reader. Here it is only intended to give ſome reaſons why leaſes of moderate endurance ought to be conſidered beſt calculated to promote the intereſt of all concerned. While it will be univerſally allowed, that with-

holding leaſes, or granting them for a period of ſeven years only, or on a ſingle life, are great impediments to the introduction of improved cultivation, it has been proved from experience, in numerous inſtances, that granting leaſes for a great number of years is not a meaſure calculated to produce the good conſequences which many people, who have conſidered the ſubject in a curſory manner, are diſpoſed to expect from it. It has been repeatedly mentioned on former occaſions, in the courſe of this work, that among farmers in particular ancient prejudices operate powerfully againſt the adoption of better methods. When a farmer attains, by means of a leaſe, a permanent intereſt in a particular farm, for thirty-eight, perhaps fifty-ſeven years, it may be admitted that he commences his improving operations with ſpirit, and according to the moſt approved faſhion of the time. But as every perſon knows, that, notwithſtanding the impediments that ſtand in the way, improvements are daily taking place in the particular modes of management as well as in the general ſyſtem of agriculture; they muſt alſo be ſatisfied, that practices, which twenty years ago were conſidered as greatly ſuperior to what were then common, are now, from the influx of agricultural knowledge, ſunk below mediocrity. Many who read this publication will be convinced, from their own knowledge, of the juſt-

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neſs of the remark. There are in Scotland, in particular, ſome very extenſive eſtates which were let, between twenty and thirty years ago, on what were called Improving Leaſes; that is, on leaſes for two or three nineteen years, beſides the lifetime of the tenant, who ſhall be in the actual poſſeſſion at the expiry of the certain determinate period, ſome of which may in all probability be in endurance for upwards of a century. It is a well-known and eſtabliſhed fact, that in general (for there are exceptions) the tenants on theſe eſtates are at preſent in a torpid inactive ſtate, adhering moſt pertinaciouſly to thoſe methods of culture which at the commencement of the leaſes were moſt in vogue; while it is equally true, that the tenants on the neighbouring eſtates, who hold their farms on leaſes for nineteen or twenty-one years only, are adopting with ſpirit and alacrity thoſe methods and practices which more recent experience has proved to be real improvements.

Circumſtances, no doubt, frequently occur which render it neceſſary for the landlord to grant an active, ſpirited, improving farmer a leaſe of more than ordinary duration; ſuch as, when the tenant undertakes to improve a conſiderable extent of waſte land at his own expence, or to expend money in erecting farm-houſes, in incloſing, draining, &c. But in general, in the writer's opinion, leaſes for about twenty years

ought to be conſidered, in all reſpects, the beſt ſuited for promoting the joint intereſts of the landlord, the tenant, and the public. Were leaſes limited to this period, the landlords, generally ſpeaking, would have it in their power, once at leaſt during their occupancy, to new-model their eſtates, to introduce ſuch practices, and to direct ſuch improvements, as from their own knowledge, or from the experience of others, they were ſatisfied would prove advantageous to all concerned. Another circumſtance, in ſtating the reaſons why twenty years is ſuppoſed an equitable period for the duration of a leaſe, and in which the landlord's intereſt is materially intereſted, eſpecially where rents are paid in money, is the aſtoniſhing depreciation that has recently taken place in the value of that article. To explain this in the way moſt connected with the ſubject, it may be obſerved, that a tenant, poſſeſſing one of the leaſes above alluded to, implying the payment of L. 100 a-year of rent, although he now annually pays his landlord one hundred pieces of paper ſtamped with the value of one pound each, yet he does not actually pay him the value which ſixty pounds were of at the time the bargain was entered into; and very probably before the expiry of ſome of the leaſes the landlord will not receive five ſhillings in the pound of the underſtood value of the farms at their commencement. Had the

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rent been made payable in produce, in grain for inſtance, no great defalcation in its real value would have taken place. But where money is made the medium, twenty years leaſes ſeem as long as proprietors, in equity to themſelves or to their ſucceſſors, are entitled to grant. It has been ſaid, and the remark is juſt, that few things tend to awaken farmers into exertion more than demanding a reaſonable riſe of rent; it operates as a ſpur to their induſtry, and ſets them on adopting improved modes of huſbandry, ſuch as are beſt calculated for affording the means of anſwering this new demand. On this principle, limiting the duration of leaſes to ſomewhere about twenty years, may, in a general view, operate in ſuch a manner as to promote the intereſt of that body at large, however it may militate againſt that of a few active individuals.

Were proprietors to come to the reſolution of granting leaſes for twenty years, how greatly would the ſituation of the farmers of this country be improved beyond what it is at preſent? If, in place of ſix years only, the period were enlarged to twenty, they would be put in ſome degree on a footing with the merchant and manufacturer, in regard to the period in which they could uninterruptedly reap the fruits of their labours; and then, beſides rivalling them in aſſiduity and exertion, it might be expected, were the other obſtacles already mentioned removed,

moved, they would likewiſe in many inſtances rival them in ſucceſs.

As new arrangements between landlords and tenants generally pave the way for the introduction of improved modes of huſbandry, provided the tenants are enſured of ſuch a period of poſſeſſion as to warrant them to undertake ſuch improvements, there can be no doubt but the public are benefited thereby. Hence that duration of leaſe which entitles the tenant to commence his improvements with ſpirit, and is not of ſuch a length as to induce him, from any fortuitous circumſtances that may take place, as a riſe in the nominal price of produce, or a fall in the value of money, to ſlacken his attention, may be conſidered upon the whole as beſt; and probably twenty years is as equitable a term as, in the preſent ſtate of Britiſh agriculture, can well be fixed upon.

From the ignorance of thoſe who are for the moſt part employed in drawing leaſes in regard to all country affairs, and owing perhaps too in ſome degree to the deſire which ſome landlords ſtill retain of keeping their tenants in a degree of bondage, many improper covenants are frequently introduced. Were the writer diſpoſed, he might, by ſelecting a number of clauſes from Scotch leaſes, either current or lately expired, hold up to public view as complete a picture of ſlavery as is perhaps to be met with in any part of modern

modern Europe. But this would be no leſs unpleaſant to himſelf than diſguſting to the reader. The moſt important covenants in any leaſe are thoſe that reſpect the mode in which the farm ought to be cropped, and the general management during the period it is demiſed or leaſed. Theſe, in place of being wrapt up as it were in a cover of bombaſtical law-jargon, which is too often the caſe, ought to be detailed in plain intelligible language, and nothing introduced that is not neceſſary to convey a clear idea of the meaning of the parties at the time the tranſaction was entered into. Were this rule adopted, numerous vexatious and expenſive law-ſuits between proprietors and tenants would be prevented, and a foundation thereby laid for a greater degree of harmony and good underſtanding than, it is to be regretted, in too many inſtances at preſent exiſts. There are covenants, or obligatory clauſes, frequently ingroſſed in leaſes, to the performance of which tenants bind themſelves, although there is ſcarcely an attorney's clerk in the iſland that does not know they are not bound in law to implement them. What theſe are it would be impolitical to ſpecify; but while, from motives of propriety, they are only hinted at, in place of being fully explained, it is not the leſs neceſſary that proprietors ſhould make a point of expunging from ſuch deeds every clauſe or covenant

covenant that they are fully ſatisfied will not ſtand the teſt in a court of law.

The three reſpectable farmers who wrote the Report of the Weſt Riding of Yorkſhire have uſed many very ſpecious arguments to convince the Board of Agriculture, that "covenants (by which they mean reſtrictions) are inimical to all good huſbandry;" and add, "they ſink the farmer into a ſtate of inſignificance; they contract his mind, and lock up his ideas from ſearching after new ſchemes, which is the only method by which improvements can ever be found out; and therefore it follows, that a continuation of covenants (reſtrictions) is highly detrimental, not only to the public good, but even to the intereſt of the proprietor himſelf, by leſſening the rent that a ſuperior cultivation would be able to pay."

The writer has already, when treating of the proper rotation of crops, fully explained his ſentiments on that important ſubject; nor would he have reſumed it here, but from a thorough conviction that the framers of the Report of the Weſt-Riding of Yorkſhire, in their zeal to do as far as in them lay to get their brethren in that diſtrict relieved from the improper covenants frequenty ingroſſed in the Yorkſhire leaſes, have not only materially injured the cauſe they meant to ſerve, but the cauſe alſo of agriculture in general.

The writers of the report above quoted may probably, with great propriety, be truſted, as Lord Kames obſerves, "with unlimited powers" to cultivate their farms in that manner which is moſt agreeable to their own ideas; but this would be a moſt ruinous ſyſtem if generally adopted. Judicious rotations of cropping, and plain explicit regulations for enforcing the tenants adherence to them, have had more effect, in regard to the general and permanent improvement of the particular diſtricts where they are eſtabliſhed, than any meaſure the landlords have hitherto adopted, that of granting leaſes only excepted. It is therefore extremely unfortunate for the cauſe of agriculture, when men, poſſeſſing ſo much ſcientific knowledge as Meſſ. Rennie, Brown, and Sheriff, give their unqualified diſapprobation of a meaſure which, under proper regulations, cannot fail, and which pretty general experience has proved has not hitherto failed, to produce beneficial conſequences.

Beſides reſtrictions in regard to cropping, which ought not, however, to be adopted without due conſideration, there are many other circumſtances which require attention in framing a leaſe, and ſuch as thoſe only who have had experience in country affairs can judge of with preciſion. Several of the Engliſh reports take notice of the abſurd practice adopted by many of the proprietors, of employing attorneys in the management

of their eſtates, and repreſent it as no inconſiderable bar to the improvement of the country. This practice is not confined to England: By the following extract from the Report of the County of Stirling, with which it is intended to cloſe this account of Britiſh leaſes, it will be ſeen that it is alſo prevalent in Scotland.

"Proprietors are themſelves to blame, in many inſtances, for the ſlow progreſs which improvements have made in this quarter. Many points are neceſſary to be well weighed before an eſtate ought to be relet. It is alſo neceſſary to mention one unfortunate circumſtance in the management of many eſtates in this county, chiefly thoſe which are the property of abſentees. It is too often the practice of theſe owners to commit the entire management of their affairs to men of the law, writers, attorneys, or by whatſoever name one chooſes to call them. Theſe perſons are almoſt univerſally ignorant of country buſineſs; their whole merit with their conſtituent conſiſts in the regularity with which they collect the rents. This is oftentimes very uſeful; but when univerſally practiſed, without attending to perſons and circumſtances, becomes a nuiſance. As to *modes of culture, the ſtate of buildings, fences, roads, &c.* all of them points of very great importance, mighty little attention is beſtowed. A law-ſuit is a notable advantage to them, and which they ſeldom fail to generate

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by coercing tenants, irritating neighbours, and by other methods much eaſier felt than expreſſed. Of this improper ſyſtem of management ſundry famous inſtances are to be found in this county."

The ſize of farms, in ſome inſtances, operate againſt the general improvement of the country.—It was formerly mentioned, when treating of this ſubject in general, that the greater variety there is in the extent or ſize of farms, provided that variety be general over every diſtrict, the more extenſively will the intereſts of the nation at large be promoted. When the farms in the vicinity of a populous town are all large, the inhabitants of that town muſt be ſubjected to much greater inconvenience and expence in procuring many of the ſmaller neceſſaries and conveniences of life, than if, by a proper intermixture of large and ſmall farms, the objects of the tenant's attention had been as various as the wants of the inhabitants.

When, again, extenſive diſtricts are divided into ſmall farms, as is the caſe in Wales and the North of Scotland, as it is by men of ſuperior intelligence, activity, and capital alone, that improvements in agriculture can be either introduced or eſtabliſhed, every perſon muſt be ſatisfied, that without affording ſome farmers of this deſcription opportunities of exerting themſelves,

theſe diſtricts muſt for ever remain in a great degree unproductive. It therefore becomes not only the intereſt but the duty of the proprietors of theſe diſtricts, as members of the community, to arrange and divide their eſtates into farms of various ſizes, in place of allowing the whole to continue in ſuch ſmall allotments, that the poſſeſſors have it not in their power to render any ſervice to themſelves, or to the other inhabitants of that part of the country where they are reſident.

That farms of a large ſize can be managed with a greater degree of economy, in regard to labour, than ſmall ones, is a point ſo extremely obvious as to require no illuſtration: But it may not be improper for theſe proprietors who are ſatisfied that a variety in the ſize of farms is in every reſpect the beſt, to ſatisfy themſelves what is the ſmalleſt extent of land in one farm that can be cultivated with a reaſonable degree of economy; as, without attending to this particular, great errors may be committed in the allotment of eſtates into farms. Lord Kames has decided this point in a very conciſe manner: "A farm (his Lordſhip ſays) ought never to contain a leſs quantity of land than ſufficient for a plough; and there is no medium between that quantity and as much as will give full employment to two. Leſs than ſufficient for a plough is an evident loſs to a tenant, and conſequently

quently to the landlord; the ſervants and the cattle muſt at times be idle for want of work, or, what is worſe, they will work indolently and make no progreſs *." In ſo far, it will be generally acknowledged, his Lordſhip's ſtatement is accurate; but when he proceeds to ſtate the number of acres which may be cultivated with one plough, meaning a team of two horſes, he has fallen into a moſt egregious error. His words are, p. 291. and 292. "When one thinks of calculating what quantity of land is ſufficient for a ſingle plough, many circumſtances occur that make it impracticable to determine the point with preciſion. The difference between a light and heavy ſoil is conſiderable; and no leſs ſo the nearneſs or diſtance of manure. The mode of cropping is capital; for where all the different plants are ſown in ſpring and reaped in autumn, more ploughs are requiſite than when crops are diſperſed through the year, according to the preſent improved mode of culture. I venture only in general to ſay, that in moſt ſoils *fifty acres* (meaning Scotch acres; that is, about ſixty Engliſh) *of corn may be commanded by a ſingle plough*, provided the crops be diſtributed through the year, to afford time for managing all of them with the ſame men and cattle. But where graſs is neceſſary for keeping the ſoil in heart,

* The Gentleman Farmer, p. 290.

heart, a farm ought to be enlarged in proportion to the quantity of graſs required; for there ought always to be as much land in tillage as fully to occupy a plough. If a third part in graſs be ſufficient, the farm ought to conſiſt of ſeventy-five acres; if a half be neceſſary, the farm ought to be a hundred acres; and if the ſoil be ſo mean as to require two-thirds in graſs, the extent of the farm ought to be one hundred and fifty acres. If the reader be curious about further particulars, I refer him to the ſeventh chapter, in which a few examples are given of the number of acres that, in different modes of cropping, may be commanded by one plough."

One of the rotations of cropping which his Lordſhip particularifes, is that formerly mentioned as being now generally adopted in the Carſe of Gowrie, viz. 1*ſt*, Fallow; 2*d*, Wheat; 3*d*, Peaſe or Beans; 4*th*, Barley; 5*th*, Clover; and, 6*th*, Oats: and he ſuppoſes that a farm of 72 acres, excluſive of garden and paſturage, may be cultivated by one team; that is, ſixty Scotch acres of tillage land, beſides the twelves acres in clover. In deſcribing another rotation of cropping, which he conſiders better adapted to ſtrong carſe clay ſoils, he limits the extent of tillage lands to 48 Scotch, or about 57 Engliſh acres. The writer has not hitherto been in any part of Great Britain where ſtrong clay ſoils prevail, and where more labour is perform-

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ed by a team than in the Carſe of Gowrie; and yet he heſitates not to maintain, that even there, where the ploughmen are expert, and the labouring horſes, in reſpect of ſtrength and mettle, ſuperior to the general run even in the more improved parts of either kingdom, the farmers, with all their activity (and no perſon will charge them juſtly with being indolent), have not hitherto been able to accompliſh the management of much above half the number of tillage acres by one team that his Lordſhip ſtates as being practicable to effect. It is not to be ſuppoſed that the opinion of one writer, in regard to a particular point of agriculture, when ſet in oppoſition to that of another greatly more reſpectable, is to have much weight with a judicious reader; but when facts are brought forward that contradict opinions, theſe, by whomſoever promulgated, muſt be held as opinions only. Particular circumſtances, as Lord Kames juſtly obſerves, muſt make a material difference in regard to the number of tillage acres, the management of which can be accompliſhed with one team. But proprietors, to whom theſe obſervations are more particularly addreſſed, can be under no difficulty, by giving themſelves the trouble of making the neceſſary inquiries, to aſcertain, according to the rotation of cropping propoſed to be adopted, what is the leaſt number of acres that ought to be ſet apart to be cultivated

tivated by one team; or, in other words, what is the ſmalleſt number of acres in one farm that the tenant can cultivate on terms in a conſiderable degree economical. The reſult of ſuch inquiries will be, that Lord Kames has ſtated a ſyſtem upon ſuppoſition, which it is phyſically impoſſible to reduce to practice.

The modes uſually adopted for letting farms, ſome of which are extremely reprehenſible, fall next under conſideration.—It has already been remarked, that additional rents operate in general as a ſpur to agricultural improvements. That this has actually been proved to be the caſe, and that in numerous inſtances, conſiſts with the writer's own knowledge. But it does not thence follow, that the more an animal is ſpurred and jaded, the greater exertions it will continue to make, and that there is thereby the leſs danger of its becoming reſtive; on the contrary, exhauſted as it muſt be by over-exertion, is there not a much greater probability of its becoming incapable of moving at all? Some perſons, over-zealous in adminiſtering this ſort of ſpur, act as if they did not know that it is poſſible to fix a fair maket price on a farm, and ſeem to regulate their conduct in letting lands agreeable to the old ſaying, "That a thing is worth juſt what it will bring." It cannot be ſuppoſed that thoſe who act on ſuch principles will feel them-

ſelves diſpoſed to pay attention to any obſervations on the ſubject of letting lands that do not coincide with their own ideas. There are many reaſons, however, that induce the writer to conſider it incumbent on him to ſtate ſuch facts and circumſtances, reſpecting the modes of letting farms in theſe kingdoms, as have come to his knowledge; and when he ſhall have done ſo, every reader is at perfect liberty to draw his own concluſions.

The modes uſually adopted for letting farms are not confined to two or three, although two or three ſhall only be taken notice of. They are as various as the whim, or caprice, or ſometimes the avarice, of proprietors can deviſe. That proprietors ought to receive a fair conſideration for the uſe of their lands, no reaſonable perſon will deny; but that they ſhould deſcend to do little things in order to obtain more than an equivalent, is a propoſition that ſcarcely any perſon will maintain.

One method of letting farms, little, in the writer's opinion, to the credit either of thoſe who adviſe or thoſe who direct the meaſure, is by public auction. This, although a practice adopted by ſome proprietors in both kingdoms, to the honour of that reſpectable claſs at large be it ſaid, is not general. To expoſe an article to public ſale that may be transferred to the purchaſer, the price paid, and the tranſaction wound

up in a few hours, may be in many inſtances a meaſure of expediency and propriety; but, as Mr Marſhall very juſtly obſerves when diſcuſſing this ſubject, that the caſe is very different with a man who is to pay his rent half yearly, and to conform with a number of covenants and regulations, both which are neceſſary to be ſtipulated when a farm is leaſed for a number of years. He ſays, "In this caſe it is not more the *rent* than the *man* that is to be looked to and choſen. Among candidates at auctions for letting farms are generally adventurers who want judgement, and men of deſperate fortunes who want a temporary ſubſiſtence; and theſe men will ever be the higheſt bidders, will ever outbid men of judgment and capital; ſuch as will pay their rent, keep up their repairs, and improve the land; ſuch as ought ever to be, and ever are, the choice of judicious managers of eſtates *."

This deſcription of offerers, who moſt generally attend at auctions of leaſes of farms in the weſt of England, are not confined to that diſtrict of country alone; in every other part of the iſland where farms are leaſed in this manner, ſuch characters make their appearance. Were the proprietors who adopt this rule of conduct to be the only ſufferers, by having tenants ſuch as Mr Marſhall deſcribes introduced upon their eſtates

* Marſhall's Rural Economy of the Weſt of England, vol. i. p. 74.

eſtates, no perſon would regret the circumſtance; but unfortunately, in ſo far as improvements on a farm begin to ſlacken, or take a retrograde motion, in ſo far the general cauſe of agriculture ſuffers.

Another method ſtill more reprehenſible, becauſe leſs honourable, is that of advertiſing a leaſe of a farm in the public papers, under the condition "that ſuch offers as are not accepted ſhall be kept *ſecret*, if deſired." How the gentlemen, who authoriſe ſuch advertiſements to be inſerted in the public papers (and they are by no means uncommon in thoſe of Edinburgh), can reconcile themſelves to the propriety of ſuch a practice, it may be difficult to determine; but the writer would not require a ſtronger preſumptive proof to ſatisfy his mind that ſome ſpecies of fraud is thereby intended, and that for the plaineſt of all reaſons; for if the tranſaction be meant to be conducted on fair and honourable principles, why make a myſtery of it? Why encourage people, by this under-hand kind of dealing, to come forward to make offers in ſecret, who dare not do it in the face of all the world? The prevalency of the practice has, in Scotland at leaſt, given it a kind of ſanction; but that gentleman muſt have had a conſiderable degree of reſolution who firſt permitted his name to be coupled with ſuch an advertiſement. In ſome of the agricultural reports it is ſtated, that

a want of confidence exiſts to ſuch a degree between landlords and tenants, as in many caſes to prove an obſtacle to the introduction or eſtabliſhment of any ſort of improvement. If adopting either of the modes of letting farms above-deſcribed be not reaſon ſufficient why farmers ſhould withhold their confidence, where, under ſuch circumſtances, it would be ſo much miſplaced, it is ſcarcely poſſible to ſuppoſe a caſe where a man could be vindicated for not placing confidence, though confidence was not due.

It will, however, give ſatisfaction to every liberal mind, to underſtand that by far the greateſt number of agreements for leaſes have their origin in fair candid converſations, that take place between the proprietors or their agents and the tenants; and that where the good ſenſe and diſcretion of the latter entitle him to ſuch confidence, and his opinion to ſo much reſpect, he is in general conſulted and adviſed with as to the manner in which the moſt important covenants of the leaſe ought to be framed. Were this rule of conduct to be more generally adopted, that confidence which the tenant has always a heartfelt ſatisfaction in placing in his landlord, when from experience he is convinced it will not be abuſed, would ſoon be reſtored, and both parties would feel, what is unqueſtionably the caſe, namely, that the intereſt of the one is intimately connected with that of the other. But

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while an induſtrious active tenant has reaſon to ſuſpect that the leaſe of a farm, on the improvement of which he has expended both his time and his money, will be brought to the hammer, and aſſigned over to the higheſt bidder, no matter of what deſcription; or when he ſees an advertiſement in the public papers, importing that all his enemies are at perfect liberty, and that in the moſt ſecret manner, to ſtep forward, and either deprive him of his farm, or raiſe the rent to ſuch a degree as, if he continues in the poſſeſſion of it, may have the effect to render him a ſlave for life,—he would be worſe than a madman were he to confide in thoſe who were capable of acting in a manner ſo diametrically oppoſite to his intereſt, and to thoſe principles on which their conduct, under ſuch circumſtances, ought to be regulated.

To let an eſtate properly, is, in many inſtances, a very difficult buſineſs; and to conduct that buſineſs without giving offence, requires no ſmall degree of management, as will be afterwards more fully explained. Suffice it here to ſay, that agents are often blamed when the proprietors are in fault. Were proprietors to do what people in any other ſtation or ſituation in life would be aſhamed not to have done; were they to acquire a proper knowledge of their own affairs, cultivate a good underſtanding with their tenants, and, by ſeeing now and then with their

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own eyes, be enabled to judge for themſelves: Were this the caſe, the management of eſtates would not only be an undertaking leſs arduous, but the intereſts of agriculture would alſo be greatly promoted. While proprietors continue to evince a ſovereign contempt for every thing that has the moſt diſtant connection with buſineſs, or an inveſtigation of their own affairs, as is in general too much the caſe, ſuch a conduct muſt operate in various ways as an obſtacle to the improvement of the country.

The ſpecies of rent that ought to be ſtipulated in place of perſonal ſervices, &c. is alſo a circumſtance that merits the attention of proprietors, or their agents, when making new arrangements with tenants. Various reaſons have been ſtated in the preceding pages, as having induced the writer to conſider money as by no means ſo equitable a rent as grain; but it is unneceſſary to enter particularly on the ſubject. The reaſon of again introducing it, is with a view of calling to the reader's recollection its having been ſtated in the beginning of the ſecond volume, that, in the North of Scotland, the rents are to a certain extent paid in perſonal ſervices; the tenants being bound to plough and harrow a certain portion of the proprietor's farm; to reap, carry home, thraſh, dreſs, and mill a certain quantity of his crop at their own charges; and that they

are alſo bound to pay poultry, eggs, cheeſe, ſheep, ſwine, fiſh, linen, yarn, &c. It might have been unavoidably neceſſary, from the want of a circulating medium in the early periods of the hiſtory of this country, to oblige the tenants to pay their rents in perſonal ſervices, and in the various articles of produce which their farms afforded. It muſt be conſidered a ſingular circumſtance in the Hiſtory of Great Britain, that in the end of the eighteenth century, and at a period when the introduction of improvements in agriculture is the chief topic of converſation, there ſhould exiſt proprietors who are ſo loſt to every ſentiment regarding what is due to the community of which they are members, to the people whom Providence has placed under their protection, and to the improvement of their native country, as to perſiſt in demanding from their tenants a ſpecies of rent which no farmer, who is entitled to the name, would ſubmit to pay, nor any proprietor, who regarded the good of his country or his own intereſt, think of requiring.

It would be wrong to detain the reader with making any obſervations reſpecting how much the payment of rents in the manner above deſcribed muſt operate as an obſtacle to the introduction of ſpirited agriculture. It is evident that the poor people, who are ſo ſituated, muſt be ſunk to the loweſt ſtate of dependency; and that

that unleſs the proprietors ſhall be induced from the example of others, or commanded by precept (by an act of the legiſlature), to adopt an oppoſite line of conduct, it is vain to talk of improvements in agriculture to people who cannot, by any exertion of which they are capable, improve or render tolerable their own ſituation.

The propriety of increaſing, or at leaſt of not decreaſing, the farmer's capital, is the only other circumſtance that, in the view of their making ſuch arrangements with their tenants as cannot fail, in a material degree, to promote the intereſts of agriculture, it is intended to mention in this ſection as meriting the proprietors conſideration.

Whoever is converſant in the management of eſtates, muſt be fully ſatisfied that farmers renting a larger extent of land than they have a capital properly to ſtock and improve, is no inconſiderable obſtacle to the introduction of better modes of huſbandry. Numerous inſtances, to prove the truth of this aſſertion, might be pointed out in perhaps every diſtrict of Great Britain; at leaſt many ſuch have fallen under the writer's obſervation. It conſiſts with his knowledge, that ſome farmers, at bargaining for a leaſe, have ſtated their capitals at more than three times the ſum, which in a few years afterwards it was found they were ever in poſſeſſion of.

of. By thus acting, they not only did irreparable injury to themſelves, but alſo a material one to the landlords; as the improvement of the lands which, under the preſumption that they poſſeſſed ſufficient capitals, were leaſed to them, in place of being put under the management of others who actually poſſeſſed capitals ſufficient, with proper induſtry, to ſtock and improve them, were, owing to the impropriety of their conduct, greatly retarded, or, which was equally bad, ſuch improvements as had been previouſly effected were permitted to take a retrograde motion. The conſequence of which was, that diſcredit was brought on the farm, and on thoſe who were in the management of the eſtate. In ſo far, however, as the writer has had acceſs to know, farmers, who in this manner deceive themſelves, their landlords, and agents, are ſo inconſiderable in point of number, that their conduct, improper as it certainly is, would ſcarcely have any perceptible effect on the agriculture of the country, did not proprietors too frequently ſtipulate, that a part of the farmer's capital ſhould be expended in making improvements, which in nine caſes out of ten ought to be effected by the landlords, or at leaſt by the expenditure of their money.

A manufacturer can carry on his trade without being under the neceſſity of diverting any part of his capital from the proper channel. He

can hire the requiſite accommodation of houſes, warehouſes, &c. from others, and at a reaſonable rate, according to his ſituation in regard to markets. The merchant, in place of being obliged to build ſhips to tranſport his merchandiſe to diſtant markets, finds them ready in every port; and he can hire the uſe of the whole, or a part of any one he pleaſes, and at a given rate, according to the diſtance of the intended voyage. In theſe reſpects, how greatly ſuperior is his ſituation compared to that of the farmers? A very great proportion of the farmers of this country are obliged, owing to the parſimony of the proprietors, to furniſh themſelves with the neceſſary accommodation of houſes in which to carry on their buſineſs; to ſink, in erecting houſes, perhaps a third part of that capital which is indiſpenſably neceſſary, or which in almoſt any caſe would be uſefully employed, in carrying on their buſineſs, in laying a foundation for their own future comfort, and in ſecuring to the landlord a well paid rent.

To expend money in erecting buildings, in incloſing, draining, and ſuch improvements, is certainly much more the buſineſs of the landlords than the tenants. Beſides that the former have a much more permanent intereſt in ſuch improvements, they ought alſo to reflect that the capitals of the generality of farmers are very limited, in proportion to the extent of lands which they

they wiſh to farm; and that by diverting any portion of theſe capitals from the channels in which they ought, for the mutual intereſt of the parties, to flow, they retard thoſe improvements which it is very probably their principal object to effect. With ſuch farmers as poſſeſs a ſufficiency both of ſpirit and capital, the matter is very different. With them, arrangements may be made on very different principles. They will be ſatisfied with a conſideration in time, in additional duration of leaſe, for ſuch improvements as they may become bound to effect: but farmers who can with propriety treat and conclude at ſuch terms will, it is to be feared, for many years yet to come continue to be the ſmalleſt number. It is not uncommon for merchants or manufacturers to borrow money on intereſt for carrying on their various trades; nor can it be conſidered in any degree derogatory to the character of a farmer to covenant to pay his landlord intereſt for money expended, to promote his convenience or advantage, eſpecially when done, as it muſt always be, in the manner moſt agreeable to himſelf.

It may tend to the information of ſome proprietors, as well as farmers, to ſtate, in the firſt place, how the account would ultimately ſtand, on the ſuppoſition that, at the commencement of a twenty-one years leaſe, the landlord was to advance L. 100 for the purpoſe of building

houſes, and for which the tenant became bound to pay him five *per cent. per annum*; and, in the ſecond, how the tenant ſtands at the cloſe of a leaſe of the ſame duration, who ſhall have expended a like ſum of his own capital in furniſhing himſelf with the neceſſary accommodation in reſpect to houſes, and which the landlord is obliged to refund at the expiry of the leaſe.

Suppoſe a proprietor had agreed to expend L. 100 in building houſes, or in executing any other eſſential improvements, the benefits of which the tenant was to reap during the currency of his leaſe, and in conſideration of which he had become bound to pay five *per cent. per annum* during his occupancy; this annuity of L. 5 a-year, paid in name of intereſt, would, if improved by compound intereſt for twenty-one years, amount to L. 178 : 11 : 10: therefore, in this view, L. 178 : 11 : 10 ought to be conſidered by the tenant as actually paid by him for the uſe of this L. 100 during a leaſe of twenty-one years. Although this may appear to ſome as extravagant, the contrary is the caſe; for if a farmer will appropriate L. 100 of his own money to be improved at compound intereſt for a like period, he will find that *the ſurplus* will amount to preciſely the ſame ſum.

When a farmer covenants with his landlord to furniſh himſelf with the neceſſary accommodation of houſes, or becomes bound to incloſe a farm,

farm, on condition of being repaid at the end of the leaſe, the ſum or ſums which ſuch improvements ſhall have coſt him at the commencement, he may be thought to pay the ſame ſum as intereſt of the money thus expended, for the reaſon above-mentioned; namely, that he could have improved the intereſt of the money in the ſame ratio that the proprietor could have done. But there is one view of this ſubject that merits conſideration. If a farmer expends L. 100 of his own money on building houſes, &c. and which ſum the landlord becomes bound to repay at the expiry of the leaſe, ſhould the farmer be under the neceſſity, owing to any unforeſeen accident, to ſell his intereſt in this L. 100 ſoon after the houſes have been erected, or other improvements made, on account of the diſtance of the period at which it is payable by the landlord, it would be worth no more, in ready money, to the tenant than L. 35 : 17 : 10.

Some proprietors inſiſt on receiving ſix, others ſeven, and others again ſeven and a half, *per cent.* for money expended by them on the improvement of particular farms. When ſix *per cent.* is demanded, the tenant, by the time a leaſe of twenty-one years expires, will have paid, *beyond legal intereſt*, ſums which, if improved to the utmoſt extent by compound intereſt at 5 *per cent.* would at laſt, on L. 100 for twenty-

one

one years, amount to - L. 35 14 3
At 7 *per cent.* to - - 71 8 6
At 7½ *per cent.* to - - 89 15 7½

But notwithſtanding of this evident ſacrifice of property, and however far it may be improper on the part of the landlords to ſtipulate with their tenants for the payment of higher intereſts for money expended on the improvement of their eſtates than the law in ordinary caſes allows to be paid; yet, in very many inſtances where the the farmer's capital is too limited for the extent of his undertaking, it would be much for his advantage to accept of the uſe of the landlord's money at ſix or even ſeven *per cent.* rather than to deprive himſelf of the uſe of his own for carrying on the operations of huſbandry according to the moſt approved ſyſtem; as purchaſing lime, marl, well-conſtructed implements, cattle of ſufficient ſtrength, &c. &c. The conduct of landlords, in not more generally advancing money to execute ſome of the moſt expenſive improvements that are neceſſary to be effected before ſpirited agriculture can be introduced upon their eſtates, appears extremely incomprehenſible. It is well known, that when a perſon has money to lend, he prefers a mortgage on land, or what in Scotland is called Heritable Security, to that of any individual, however reſpectable. Many proprietors, from miſtaken ideas, while they lend money on the ſecurity of other people's eſtates,

frequently bring their tenants under obligations to mortgage a part of their capitals on their own. This is certainly an extremely abſurd ſyſtem, and evinces, in the cleareſt manner, that ſuch proprietors do not all that is in their power to promote their own real intereſt, the reaſonable independence of their tenants, or the good of the country. Their own intereſt is neglected, in ſo far as tenants, in general, pay a higher intereſt for money ſo expended than the law allows to be paid for the uſe of money lent in mortgage: beſides, were the money expended in this manner on the improvement of their own eſtates in place of being lent, perhaps for the expreſs purpoſe of improving thoſe of their neighbours, they would reap that increaſe of revenue which the others, by a judicious application of their money, are entitled to receive. That the independent and ſpirited conduct of a farmer riſes or falls with the ability he poſſeſſes of conducting his affairs without embarraſſment, will not require much reaſoning to prove. It is a common ſaying, and a true one, that a poor farmer is always a bad one; therefore, when proprietors ſubject their tenants, by improper covenants in leaſes, to expend money for any other purpoſes than thoſe it ought to be applied to, they adopt a meaſure which muſt have the effect, except in particular caſes, of rendering them poor, and conſequently dependent.

It

It is equally clear that the intereſt of agriculture, and of courſe that of the country, ſuffers, and has materially ſuffered, from proprietors having too generally adopted this line of conduct. Suppoſe, for inſtance, that one-tenth part only of the improving farmers capitals, over Great Britain at large, is ſunk in erecting neceſſary buildings, in draining, and in incloſing, and that this is the caſe there is every reaſon to believe; if ſo, what an immenſe ſum is diverted from its proper channel, and locked up from being uſeful in carrying on agriculture with ſpirit? In the hands of farmers of the above deſcription, what wonderful effects would be produced by the uſe of ſuch a capital? What a ſpur would it give to their induſtry and exertion? And how great and beneficial the conſequences that would neceſſarily enſue?

Knowing that there are proprietors who have adopted a different line of conduct, that there are proprietors who, ſatisfied of its being better policy to mortgage their ſuperabundant money on their own eſtates than on that of their neighbours (notwithſtanding the one is of a redeemable nature, and the other not), and who have not heſitated, on every occaſion, to expend money in executing ſome of the more eſſential and neceſſary improvements, ſuch as muſt be effected before the way can be paved for the introduction of new and better modes of agriculture,

ture, and hoping that the example of theſe public-ſpirited gentlemen may induce others to follow ſo laudable an example, the writer ſhall, in the ſucceeding chapter, make ſome obſervations regarding the manner in which thoſe, which may be called the primary improvements, may be made on the moſt equitable and economical terms both for the proprietor and tenant. In the mean time it may not be improper, by an enumeration, to recal to the reader's recollection the various obſtacles that bar the way to the general improvement of the country, and which ſhall be done in the order in which they have been diſcuſſed, viz.

Obſtacles which the Legiſlature only can remove; as,

The payment of tithes in kind.
The poor's rates.
Cuſtomary tenures.
Unproductive ſtate of the crown-lands.
Improper management of the church-lands.
Lands held under entail.
Commons and commonable rights.
Open-field lands.
Thirlage to mills.
The game-laws; and to which may be added,
The corn-laws, and
The miſerable ſtate of the pariſh-roads.

Obſtacles in the power of proprietors to remove.

The want of leaſes. Under which general head may be compriſed,

Improper covenants in leaſes, and the period of duration beſt calculated to promote the intereſt of all parties.

The ſize of farms, in ſome inſtances, operate againſt the general improvement of the country.

The modes uſually adopted for letting farms, ſome of which are extremely reprehenſible.

The ſpecies of rent that ought to be ſtipulated in place of perſonal ſervices, &c.

The propriety of increaſing, or at leaſt of not decreaſing, the farmer's capital.

From this enumeration, and from the preceding detailed account, however much the reader may have been taught of late to believe reſpecting the probability, nay, the certainty, of a great and general improvement being ſpeedily effected, in regard to the modes of conducting the agricultural operations of theſe kingdoms; yet he muſt be ſatisfied, that without a total alteration in many important particulars, every hope that ſuch an event will ſoon take place muſt be vain and eluſory. While ſuch obſtacles are allowed to bar the way, none but men of heated imaginations will entertain ſanguine expectations reſpecting the general improvement of

of the country. If, through the intervention of the legiſlature, proper alterations are made in ſuch of the exiſting laws as tend to depreſs the farming intereſt; and if, through the medium of the National Board of Agriculture, meaſures can be deviſed to impreſs the proprietors with a thorough conviction, that to grant their tenants ſuch a ſhare of independence, as leaſes of moderate endurance are calculated to enſure, this deſirable event may in time be effected. But while the executive government continues to beſtow all its favours on the merchants and manufacturers, and the members of the Board of Agriculture to evince a more ſedulous attention to the improvement of the minute branches of huſbandry, as the cultivation of potatoes, &c. than to the emancipation of the farmers from their preſent ſtate of ſervitude (a meaſure which ought to have been the firſt and chief object of their attention), there are few men who can, on rational principles, ſatisfy either themſelves or others, that there are ſubſtantial grounds for believing a general improvement will ſoon be effected in the agriculture of the country.

It would have afforded infinitely more ſatisfaction to the writer, could he, in place of dwelling ſo long on the obſtacles that impede improvements, with equal propriety have congratulated his countrymen on the happineſs they experienced, in conſequence of none ſuch having exiſted;

iſted. But as, to the woeful experience of many an induſtrious farmer, they do actually exiſt, he conceives he would have been negligent in his duty had he not endeavoured to exhibit them in their true colours. That it is not only practicable, but eaſy, to remove them by the uſe of proper means, is an unqueſtionable fact. Whether theſe means ſhall be ſpeedily and ſucceſsfully uſed, time only can diſcover; that they may, muſt be the ſincere wiſh of every lover of his country.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXIII.

Improvements ſuggeſted, and the beſt Means to be adopted, for encouraging that Spirit for Agricultural Improvement which is at preſent ſo general pointed out.

HAVING endeavoured, in the preceding pages, after giving a ſhort agricultural deſcription of each county, to lay before the reader a particular account of the methods moſt generally adopted for carrying on the various branches of huſbandry; and having alſo ſtated, at conſiderable length, the numerous obſtacles which obſtruct, and which, unleſs removed, ever muſt obſtruct, the complete improvement of theſe kingdoms—it is now propoſed, on the ſuppoſition that theſe obſtacles will ſome time or other be removed, to call the reader's attention to the ſeveral means neceſſary to be adopted, in order to render Great Britain, what every inhabitant would wiſh it to be, namely, a well cultivated country. In doing this, it is intended to adhere

to

to the order in which the moſt intereſting ſubjects have been arranged, and afterwards to take notice of ſome particulars which have not hitherto fallen under conſideration.

After the ſituation of the farmers is improved by granting leaſes of moderate endurance, and after the other obſtacles before mentioned are removed, proprietors and farmers will do well to attend to the following hints:

I. *To erect ſubſtantial and commodious farm-houſes and offices, according to the extent of the farms, and the modes in which the lands are occupied.*

It muſt be obvious to every proprietor, that the more their tenants are taught to know the comforts of life, the greater will be their exertions, in order to be enabled to participate in the enjoyment of them; and that commodious dwellings are to be ranked among the number, will not be denied. But this is not all; proprietors ought to reflect that ſuitable and commodious farm-houſes are as neceſſary for enabling the farmer to carry on his buſineſs with advantage, as warehouſes are to the merchant, or workſhops to the manufacturer.

The ſum and ſubſtance of all the reports preſented to the Board of Agriculture, in ſo far as reſpects farm-buildings, is, that, except in the

ſouth of Scotland, and the north-eaſt part of England, including alſo Norfolk, the farm-houſes are not only in general inadequate to the farmer's accommodation, but for the moſt part ſo improperly ſituated, as to increaſe, in a very conſiderable degree, the expence of cultivation. In the reports of Wales and the north of Scotland the dwelling-houſes are ſtated to be extremely bad, and the offices, if poſſible, worſe; and to increaſe the evil, that they are for the moſt part placed at the extremity of the farms. On the whole, that they are in ſuch a ſituation as would render it difficult for farmers in any of the diſtricts above-mentioned "to conceive the ſhifts and contrivances made uſe of as ſubſtitutes for proper accommodation," were they not to reflect that the period is not far gone ſince, from ſimilar cauſes, they were themſelves obliged to have recourſe to ſimilar ſhifts. In the ſouthern, midland, and weſtern counties of England, the general ſituation of the tenants, in reſpect to houſes, cannot be ſaid to be materially different from that now taken notice of. In many of the recently incloſed pariſhes, regular well conſtructed farm-buildings are to be ſeen; and ſuch are alſo to be obſerved in pariſhes of other deſcriptions; but the inſtances are comparatively rare. The farm-houſes, in the open-field pariſhes in particular, "*are conſtructed with the ſame regard to convenience, &c.* as the fields themſelves. They

are

are frequently placed together, forming the appearance of a miſerable disjointed ſtreet; *a ſure item of the poverty of the farmers and their bad ſyſtem of huſbandry* *."

While farmers are obliged to reſort to ſuch ſhifts as above alluded to, in order to accommodate themſelves and their cattle, and to preſeve their crops, no reaſonable man can expect they will ever become ſpirited improvers. The actual loſs which they muſt unavoidably ſuſtain in the injury which their live-ſtock ſuffer from being expoſed to the inclemency of winter ſtorms, the damage which their crops are liable to from being lodged in inſufficient houſes, the immenſe quantity of dung which is thus either loſt or rendered of very little value, and the increaſe of expence in general management, are, in a national view, great beyond all calculation.

The beſt ſituation, arrangement, &c. of farm-houſes, and the advantages which are known uniformly to reſult from farmers poſſeſſing ſubſtantial and ſufficiently extenſive accommodation for carrying on their buſineſs, have already been brought under the reader's review, as well as the moſt economical way in which they can be erected.

Building proper farm-houſes is not only a neceſſary

* See the Report of the County of Buckingham.

ceſſary mean of improvement, but one that muſt precede all others, granting of leaſes and forming of roads of communication only excepted; at the ſame time it appears equally evident, that farm-houſes ought to be erected with a due regard to economy, whether the money be advanced by the proprietor or tenant. In neither caſe ought the ſum expended to be greater than the tenant is enabled, from the ſuperior accommodation thereby afforded, to pay the intereſt of; for it makes no difference, on general principles, whether the farmer ſuſtains the loſs of the intereſt by advancing the money himſelf, or whether he becomes bound for the yearly payment of it to the landlord. This rule is not, however, always attended to; farm-buildings are ſometimes to be ſeen, in the erecting of which real convenience and utility ſeem to have been leſs attended to than ſhow. When both can be combined without increaſing the expence, and daily experience proves it to be practicable, they ought never to be ſeparated; but when a tenant ſinks his own money in building houſes, or pays intereſt for that advanced by the landlord, it becomes his duty to conſider, that convenient farm-buildings are better means of enabling him to reimburſe himſelf of the money he has advanced, or to pay intereſt for that advanced by the landlord, than houſes which, however much they may catch the eye of the paſ-

ſing ſtranger, are inconvenient and incommodious to the occupier.

The only other obſervation that occurs as being neceſſary to be made on this ſubject is, that in all arrangements between landlords and tenants, in regard to erecting and keeping farm-houſes in repair, the leaſes ſhould contain covenants calculated as much as poſſible for uniting the intereſt of the parties in the preſervation of them. By this means the farmer would be better accommodated during the period of his occupancy, and the landlord would avoid being ſubjected to heavy repairs at the entry of every new tenant.

II. *Introduce the uſe of ploughs, and ſuch other implements of huſbandry, as are beſt calculated to perform the various operations with expedition and effect.*

The principal inſtruments uſed in carrying on the huſbandry of theſe kingdoms, as ploughs, harrows, carts, thraſhing-mills, &c. have already been deſcribed; and notice has alſo been taken of the impolicy evinced by the proprietors of particular diſtricts in not exerting every endeavour to excite a diſpoſition in their tenants to introduce the uſe of ſuch implements as in other diſtricts have been found better adapted for performing

forming the various operations, and by the uſe of which the expence of cultivation and of general management have been greatly leſſened.

The common Welſh plough, for inſtance, is perhaps the moſt awkward, unmeaning tool to be found in any civilized country; it is not calculated to cut a furrow, but to tear it open by main force. The ſhare is like a large wedge; the coulter ſometimes comes before the point of the ſhare, and ſometimes ſtands above it; the earth-board is a thing never thought of; but a ſtick (a hedge ſtake or any thing) is faſtened from the right ſide of the heel of the ſhare, and extends to the hind part of the plough: this is intended to turn the furrow, which it ſometimes performs, ſometimes not; ſo that a field ploughed with this machine looks as if a drove of ſwine had been moiling it *.

When it is ſtated, that the generality of farmers in the northern provinces of Scotland are their own plough-makers, it will be readily inferred, that many of the new ploughed fields in that part of the country muſt exhibit a ſimilar appearance to that above deſcribed. It is not to be expected that a plough of any one particular conſtruction, however perfect it may be, will ever be univerſally uſed in every diſtrict; but it is nevertheleſs reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that

* See Report of the County of Pembroke.

were the proprietors to exert themſelves, ploughs ſo improved in conſtruction, although varying in form, might be introduced as would perform the work in a ſuperior manner, and not only in leſs time, but with the application of half the ſtrength that is at preſent deemed neceſſary.

But it is not to Wales and the northern provinces of Scotland that ploughs of improper conſtruction are confined; they abound alſo in a great number of the old improved counties in England, and to ſuch a degree over the iſland at large, as to increaſe aſtoniſhingly the expence of cultivation. It is probable that, taking a general view of what may be called the Teams of Great Britain, not leſs than four horſes, or ſix oxen, are, on an average, employed in drawing each plough; while, if the practice of particular diſtricts is inquired into, as that of the ſouth of Scotland, the counties of Norfolk, Northumberland, Durham, and a great part of Yorkſhire, it will be found, that the ploughs are ſo ſuperior in conſtruction to the old-faſhioned ſorts generally uſed, that half the number of horſes, or of oxen, are ſufficient to do the ſame extent of work.

In the Report of the North Riding of Yorkſhire, the practice of ploughing with only two horſes is very properly ſtated as being well worth the attention of farmers in theſe counties where three, and often four, are unneceſſarily uſed; and the

the reaſon is added, namely, "A Yorkſhire ploughman will by himſelf plough full as much land in the ſame time with two horſes, and full as well, as a *ſouth countryman will with four and a driver.*" If this remark be well founded, and that it is, cannot be controverted, what an immenſe field for improvement opens to the view of the proprietors of Great Britain, who, by a little exertion, and a moderate degree of perſeverance, might in a ſhort time convince their tenants of the advantages to be derived from uſing well-conſtructed ploughs; which, if univerſally introduced, would leſſen the expence of cultivation to a degree almoſt incredible?

From what was formerly ſtated, it is preſumed the reader is ſatisfied, that, for carrying on the ordinary operations of huſbandry, carts drawn by two horſes are greatly ſuperior to large, cumberſome, unwieldy, waggons, that require four, or five, or ſix, horſes to move them along. It has of late been a ſubject pretty much agitated, whether ſingle-horſe carts are not to as great a degree ſuperior to thoſe drawn by two horſes as theſe have been repreſented to be to waggons. Single-horſe carts are certainly loaded and unloaded with much leſs trouble, and are in every way more eaſily managed, eſpecially when carrying out dung, or when uſed for doing any odd jobs on a farm. It has alſo been found, from long experience, and the moſt attentive obſervation, that one horſe, in a cart properly

perly fitted to its ſize and ſtrength, will draw, on any road, *two-thirds* of the load that two horſes, drawing in a line and of equal power, are capable of doing. The carters of the town of Falkirk, in Stirlingſhire, for example, have long been famous for the great weights drawn by their carts *. Before the navigable canal between Forth and Clyde was made, the whole goods tranſported to and from Glaſgow, and the ports upon the Forth, were drawn upon one and two horſe carts belonging to theſe carters; the moſt expert of whom have long given the preference to carts drawn by one horſe, as they experience no difficulty in carrying upon a cart drawn by a ſingle horſe, from Borrowſtounneſs to Glaſgow, a diſtance of upwards of thirty miles, and of indifferent road, from twenty to thirty-five hundred weight. It is further worthy of remark, that at the great iron-work at Carron, the company engaged in it formerly made uſe of waggons and waggon-ways to wheel their coals and other heavy articles upon; but have entirely laid aſide the uſe of waggons and waggon-ways, and, on principles of economy, employed carters with ſingle-horſe carts to tranſport the heavy articles which they require †. For theſe reaſons, as well as for others that might

* The ſame obſervation holds good in reſpect to Cumberland, where ſingle-horſe carts are chiefly uſed.

† See the Report of Stirlingſhire.

might be mentioned, the writer begs leave to recommend to the improving farmers to make ſuch experiments as may ſatisfy themſelves and the public in regard to what ſort of carriage for general uſe is in every view moſt advantageous. That one muſt be preferable to another, as they differ ſo materially, is unqueſtionable. To know which, upon the whole, is beſt, is a matter of very conſiderable importance.

The more general introduction of thraſhing-mills cannot be too ſtrongly recommended, as, from the united teſtimony of thoſe who have had experience of them, their utility is completely eſtabliſhed. The numerous uſeful machines that have been lately invented, whereby manual labour, in carrying on various branches of manufactures, has been leſſened, has tended to keep the price of thoſe articles infinitely more moderate than they would have been had the ſame number of hands, that were formerly neceſſary to complete them, been ſtill employed. By the ſame parity of reaſoning, whatever tends to render leſs manual labour neceſſary in preparing grain for market, muſt not only tend to keep the price of that indiſpenſable article more moderate, but alſo to yield the farmer a greater profit on its cultivation. On the whole, were light ploughs with caſt-iron mould-boards, and carts of proper conſtruction introduced, and were thraſhing-mills erected on every farm on

which grain to any conſiderable extent is cultivated, the expence of agricultural labour would be greatly reduced. It therefore merits the attention of thoſe proprietors who take pleaſure in cultivating a farm on their own eſtates to make experiments, with a view of aſcertaining what conſtruction of implements is beſt calculated for performing the various operations at the leaſt expence of labour and money; for it is a well known fact, that, by leſſening the expence of cultivation, the tenant is able to pay a higher rent; and conſequently a great proportion of what is ſaved in that way goes ultimately into the landlord's pocket.

III. *Attend to the hours of labour, and to minute particulars, as well as to the general management of farms.*

The hours of agricultural labour in Great Britain at large are from ſix o'clock in the morning in ſummer to the ſame hour in the evening, and in winter from daylight in the morning till dark. There are ſome particular diſtricts, as the Carſe of Gowrie, &c. where labour commences at five o'clock in the morning in ſummer, and does not terminate till after ſeven in the evening. This may be properly denominated one of thoſe beneficial practices which ought to be introduced in every part of the

the iſland. It is one method, and probably the moſt effectual that can be adopted, for keeping the expence of cultivation moderate; for as ſervants wages are every year advancing, unleſs farmers will reſolve to reduce the number, and which can only be done with propriety by making thoſe whom they employ work more conſtantly, and for a longer period, the rate of labour muſt ſoon increaſe to ſuch a degree as to become a ſerious obſtacle, not only to the general introduction of improvements, but in fact to the cultivation of grain in any way.

Increaſing the hours of agricultural labour in a moderate degree cannot with propriety be conſidered as an oppreſſive meaſure. The people employed by the manufacturers are uſually at work from five o'clock in the morning in ſummer till ſeven or eight in the evening; and it ought alſo to be remembered, that the maid-ſervants in farmers families commonly work from fourteen to ſixteen hours every day throughout the year.

The importance of ſuperintending farm ſervants in the manner beſt calculated to induce them to perform their labour with ſpirit and alacrity is well known; nor would it be leſs in favour of the farmers were they to adopt generally the reſolution of increaſing the hours of labour during the buſy period at leaſt; that is, from the beginning of March till the cloſe of

harveſt, or rather till the wheat-ſeed ſeaſon is over.

The farmer who attends only to the general management of his farm, as ſeed-time and harveſt for example, falls very far ſhort of performing that duty which he owes to himſelf or to the community. There is perhaps no other buſineſs that, to conduct it properly, requires a more ſteady attention to minute particulars than that of huſbandry. Every farmer ſhould ſo arrange the plan of his work, that it may proceed regularly and without confuſion, and in ſuch a manner that proper force and attention may be applied to every part. This conduct would render farmers maſters of their time; and every thing required to be done would be performed in the proper period, not delayed till the ſeaſon and opportunity ſhall have been loſt. The impediments ariſing from rainy days, from ſick ſervants, from the occaſional and neceſſary abſence of the farmer, or from other cauſes, would in ſuch a caſe be of little conſequence; theſe would not embarraſs the operations of the farm, nor prevent the farmer from attending to the ſmalleſt concerns of it. In every view the making proper arrangements for carrying on the work muſt be advantageous to the farmer; and his being thus occupied, in place of going very frequently from home, would tend in a very material degree to promote his intereſt. "I have

pleaſure

pleaſure (ſays the reporter of the State of Agriculture in the Eaſt-Riding of Yorkſhire) in obſerving that ſeverals in the diſtrict are ſenſible of the advantages reſulting from ſuch a conduct, and purſue it ſo themſelves as to render my remarks unneceſſary for their guidance." It would be a fortunate circumſtance for farmers in general, as well as for agriculture, were they to follow the example of thoſe in the Eaſt-Riding of Yorkſhire, who are thus applauded for the attention they beſtow on the proper management of their buſineſs.

IV. *Eſtabliſh generally judicious Modes of Cropping.*

ALTHOUGH it is impoſſible to form any correct idea in regard to the extent to which the produce of the Britiſh ſoil might be increaſed, were judicious modes of cropping univerſally adopted; yet every perſon, who knows any thing about the management of land, muſt be ſenſible that it would be immenſe, perhaps one fourth at leaſt. Certain it is, there are few ſubjects connected with huſbandry that merit the attention of proprietors more than this; as nothing would contribute ſo much to increaſe the farmers returns, or more effectually ſecure the ſpeedy, and, if perſevered in, the permanent, improvement of the country.

It was formerly hinted, that the practice of adhering to regular rotations of cropping has hitherto been attended with effects more prejudicial than advantageous to British agriculture. Beſides many modes of cropping that have been eſtabliſhed in modern times, which, although perhaps well adapted to ſome ſoils and ſituations, are extremely improper in others, there are others ſtill more improper, which have been adopted in different parts of theſe kingdoms for many centuries.

What can be more improper than the ſyſtem of huſbandry adopted in the open-field pariſhes in England? There are, it is true, various modes of cropping eſtabliſhed in theſe pariſhes, but they are all nearly in the ſame degree improper. Two or three corn-crops and a fallow are the moſt generally adopted modes, and from which no variation can be made without the general and unanimous conſent of all concerned. One obſtinate farmer (and fortunate muſt that pariſh be conſidered where only one tenant of this deſcription is to be found) has it in his power to prevent the introduction of any improvement, however beneficial it may appear to the other inhabitants. By this means, the introduction of artificial graſſes and of turnip huſbandry muſt be for ever excluded, without the intervention of the legiſlature; while the never-ending rotation of corn crops, to which the lands are ſubjected,

jected, muſt render them incapable of producing any tolerable returns. If to this be added, that the ſubſiſtence which the live-ſtock are able to pick from the natural paſtures, ſet apart for that purpoſe, is ſo ſcanty as to render them of little value, when compared with thoſe that are bred and reared in incloſed pariſhes, it is probable that the returns in grain and in live-ſtock are nearly double in an incloſed pariſh, under a proper mode of management, to what they are in one ſimilar in ſoil, but which, owing to its being in the open-field ſtate, is imperfectly or improperly cultivated.

More than one-fourth of the valuable and extenſive county of Northampton remains at this day in the open-field ſtate. What a defalcation muſt thence ariſe in the agricultural productions which that county, under proper management, is capable of yielding? What an aſtoniſhing additional ſupply of grain and cattle would be neceſſarily brought to the public markets, were all the open-field pariſhes in England incloſed and brought under regular rotations of cropping, and grain, turnips, and artificial graſſes alternately cultivated? The Britiſh ports would then require to be opened, not for the purpoſe of importing the ſuperabundant produce of other countries, but for exporting that of our own.

Scarcely leſs injurious to the intereſt of the public is that too general practice of laying down

a great proportion of a parish, when inclosed, in grass, and permitting it to remain for ages in a state of pasturage. These fields, when they are continued in grass a greater number of years than is necessary for refreshing them after having been worn out with a succession of exhausting corn-crops, become less productive, and consequently less profitable to the proprietor, the farmer, and the public, than if they were managed under any judicious system, by which alternate crops of grain, artificial grasses, and other ameliorating crops, might be cultivated in rotation. In the Report of the County of Leicester it is thus stated: "Some gentlemen think the plough cannot be introduced without pillaging their property, although the contrary would be the result under proper regulations, and to which the tenants would no doubt be glad to submit. There are many farms under this disagreeable predicament, on which, if a reasonable proportion were allowed to be in tillage, a considerable quantity of wheat, barley, oats, turnips, &c. would be annually raised; and the remainder of the land, when under a proper state of cultivation, would keep more stock than at present: the land would be improved, and both landlord and tenant equally benefited. From the best information that I could get, I understood that not one half of the corn consumed in the county was cultivated in it." It is also added

in the ſame Report, "That a number of the paſtures are ſhamefully over-run with ant-hills, and to ſo very great a degree, that in many of them the ſurface of one-third of the land is nearly thus covered. And if you aſk a farmer the reaſon why he does not take them away, the conſtant anſwer is, 'We are not ſuffered to uſe the plough, and we cannot remove them without a very heavy expence by any other method; which will not anſwer, as I may very poſſibly never be repaid, being only tenant at will."

Although a pretty general adherence to graſs huſbandry may be highly proper on the weſtern ſide of the iſland, where the climate is more moiſt and rainy; yet, in the interior parts of both kingdoms, and on the eaſtern coaſts, where the climate is more favourable, there is perhaps no ſyſtem of management that could be adopted more abſurd than that mentioned above as being eſtabliſhed in Leiceſterſhire; and which, the writer knows, is by no means confined to that county, but, on the contrary, is prevalent over a great part of England, where a great proportion of the moſt uſeful land is allowed to remain in a comparatively waſte and unproductive ſtate.

Unprofitable as this mode of management muſt be conſidered by every intelligent farmer, yet there is no ſubſtantial reaſon for ſuppoſing that any general alteration will take place while the cauſe whence this pernicious practice originated

nated, namely, the payment of tithes in kind, is permitted to operate. For ſo long as the tithes from graſs-lands continue inconſiderable in value compared to thoſe collected from lands in tillage, it is not to be ſuppoſed that proprietors will permit their tenants to break up the old graſs-lands, that the tithe-owner may have an opportunity of participating more largely in the profits that would ariſe from this change of ſyſtem than he can poſſibly do according to the preſent mode of management. Were the tithe-owner's intereſt purchaſed by any proper previous arrangement, one great obſtacle to breaking up of old graſs-lands in England would be removed, as it would be then a leſs difficult matter for the proprietors and tenants of ſuch lands to agree on the terms on which it would be for their mutual intereſt to break them up. That the breaking up and bringing theſe lands under a more approved ſyſtem of management would greatly promote the general improvement of the country, and by producing a much greater abundance of grain and paſturage for cattle, tend to keep the prices for both moderate, muſt be obvious to thoſe who have obſerved in how many places thoſe old graſs-lands are over-run with ant-hills, and how generally they produce either a coarſe and unwholeſome, or a ſtinted ſort of herbage.

The only other improper ſyſtem of manage-

ment that requires to be particularized here, is that by which the land is worn out and exhausted for a number of years with a ſucceſſion of white-corn crops, and thereafter allowed to find graſſes for itſelf. This ſyſtem is not confined to one particular diſtrict: it is too generally adopted in the north of Scotland, a great part of Wales, and in ſome counties of England, as Cumberland, Weſtmoreland &c. The moſt prevailing ſyſtem through the greateſt part of Cumberland, and which is adopted on a large ſcale in the other diſtricts above-mentioned, is to have a crop of white-corn every year while the land is kept in tillage. The cultivators make no fallows, except ploughing twice and manuring for barley can be deemed ſuch.

Where a field is ploughed up from graſs, they take oats, oats, barley, oats; or, oats, barley, oats, oats, barley, oats, &c. &c. for nine, or ten, or twelve years, and then it is left to produce natural graſs for ſeven or nine years; for although ſome few farmers ſow hay, or rye-graſs ſeeds, and a little white-clover, the greateſt number leave it to nature *.

When it is conſidered how great a portion of the lands of theſe kingdoms remains in the open-field ſtate, is conſtantly in graſs, or is ſubjected to the moſt ſcourging rotations of cropping that

* See the Report of the County of Cumberland.

can poſſibly be deviſed, and how ſmall a portion conſequently is cultivated and managed in the manner beſt calculated to render it productive, it muſt be evident to every farmer of common underſtanding how, beyond all calculation, the crops of theſe kingdoms might be increaſed, both in quantity and quality, by the general eſtabliſhment of ſuch rules and methods of cropping as experience has proved, or as, from a due conſideration of circumſtances, are judged moſt likely to render the land to the greateſt degree productive without exhauſting it. Perhaps of all the lands in Great Britain that have been either anciently or recently cultivated, there is not above one-fourth of them under ſyſtems of management to which a jury of ſenſible, intelligent, improving, farmers could give their approbation: and while the management of another fourth might be conſidered by ſuch a jury as greatly improved beyond what it was in former times, that of the remaining two-fourths would be found to be conducted in nearly the ſame way it was five hundred or a thouſand years ago.

If, in conſequence of the legiſlature exerting itſelf in removing the obſtacles that bar the way to the introduction of agricultural improvements in England, the proprietors ſhall be induced to turn their attention to the due cultivation of their eſtates, they will ſoon be convinced that the union of clover and turnip huſbandry, with the cultivation

cultivation of grain, is the means by which the ſoil can be rendered capable of producing the greateſt crops; and that by obliging their tenants to adhere to rotations of cropping the beſt adapted, on a due conſideration of ſoil, climate, markets, and other circumſtances, for every particular farm, their own intereſt, as well as that of the tenants and the public, can be moſt effectually promoted. Without ſuch regulations are univerſally adopted, improvements in agriculture, however much they may form ſubjects of converſation, never will, nay, further, they never can, become either general or permanent.

V. *Accumulate as great a quantiy of Manure as poſſible, and be attentive to the proper mode of applying it to the Soil.*

TOWARDS the cloſe of the Treatiſe on Manures, contained in the ſecond volume, a comparative table is exhibited, by which may be ſeen at one view the different ſorts uſed in each kingdom; and whence alſo may be learned how much more advantageouſly ſituated, and, in numerous inſtances, how much more attentive the farmers in ſome Engliſh counties are in procuring abundance of uſeful manures, beyond thoſe in other parts of Great Britain.

To increaſe the quantity of manure, and to apply it to the greateſt advantage, are very im-

portant particulars in the management of a farm, and to which the active and intelligent farmer will always beſtow the requiſite attention, as he muſt be ſenſible that it is on the foundation of manuring in a proper manner that any good ſyſtem of huſbandry can be eſtabliſhed with effect. It is, however, an unqueſtionable fact, that there are few branches of rural economy in the conducting of which the Britiſh farmers in general evince leſs ſkill. A few farmers, it is true, may be found in every county, who, by ſuperior induſtry and application, find it no difficult matter to amaſs an abundant ſupply of manure the year before they have occaſion to uſe it; while others, not perhaps ſo fortunately ſituated, are ſo ſenſible of the advantages to be derived from applying manure in a proper ſtate of putreſcency, have the whole ſtock in their fold-yards carefully turned over as ſoon as the cattle are ſent to graſs in the ſpring; whereby a ſtrong fermentation is brought on, and the dung reduced to a proper ſtate to be applied to the fields intended for turnips the following ſeaſon. But unfortunately, owing partly to the negligence of farmers themſelves, and not leſs frequently to the parſimony of their landlords, who cannot be induced to furniſh them with proper accommodations for their live-ſtock, a great proportion of the farm-yard dung, applied to the lands of Great Britain, does not contain half the eſſence, and

and conſequently cannot have half the effect which otherwiſe it would. Many farmers, it muſt alſo be acknowledged, are as inattentive to the proper manner of applying dung as they are to collecting or preparing it. In many parts of both kingdoms it is laid on the fields at improper ſeaſons; and, after being ſpread in the moſt ſlovenly manner, is allowed to remain expoſed ſo long to the influence of the ſun and winds, that its virtues are exhaled before it is ploughed in or made to incorporate with the ſoil.

The ſubject of manures, it was formerly mentioned, was extremely intereſting; and, although hitherto but little underſtood, merits equally the attention of the theoretical and practical farmer. Perhaps no branch of the ſubject requires more inveſtigation than the advantages derived from top-dreſſing, and the various ſorts of manures that can be procured in different diſtricts for that purpoſe. This would open a new field for the cultivation of lands, hitherto conſidered in a great meaſure barren; and, it is preſumed, the practice of the Hertfordſhire farmers in this reſpect requires only to be known to be imitated where practicable.

The following extracts from the Report of that county will ſhow the advantages which the farmers derive from the practice of ſpring or top dreſſing their crops. "The ſpring or top

dreſſings are the leading features of the Hertfordſhire farming, and conſiſt of ſoot, aſhes, malt-duſt, and oil-cake duſt, or pulverized oil-cakes. The ſoot and aſhes are brought principally from London, the malt-duſt from Ware, Hertford, and other places, and the oil-cake duſt from the different oil-mills in the county and neighbourhood. The ſoot is generally uſed on the wheat-crops, which have had no previous manure; it is laid in heaps on the crops in winter, and ſown in the ſpring. The other top-dreſſings are houſed and kept dry till uſed. The average price of the Hertfordſhire top-dreſſings is as follows:

	Per ſtatute acre.
30 Buſhels ſoot, at 8d. is	L. 1 0 0
Aſhes, the carriage, the chief expence may be about - -	0 10 0
10 Buſhels oil-cake duſt, at 2s. 6d.	1 5 0
40 Buſhels malt-duſt, at 1s.	2 0 0

Theſe top-dreſſings not only ſupply the want of previous manure, but alſo, when crops are ſickly and backward in the ſpring, occaſioned either by bad ſeed ſeaſons, froſt, or other cauſes, are attended with wonderful ſucceſs, and enable the crops to vegetate quickly, and to cover and protect the ſoil on which they grow from the droughts of the enſuing ſummer. To their almoſt *magical powers* the Hertfordſhire farmers are principally indebted for their never-failing crops. Without entering into chemical analyſis

to

to diſcover the cauſe, they are ſatisfied with the effects; and therefore continue to enlarge upon the practice, although attended with conſiderable expence. The provident farmer lays in a ſtock of theſe ſorts of manures to anſwer contingencies; and, provided with this treaſure, he can remedy the evils of bad ſeed-times and ſeaſons. Theſe top or ſpring dreſſings are peculiarly applicable to poor, light, ſandy, and gravelly lands, and of courſe to the production of the ſpecifically heavieſt corn, and put ſuch lands more on an equality, in point of annual value, with ſtronger and richer ſoils. Happy would it be to more diſtant farmers, and to agriculture in general, could an adequate ſubſtitute to the Hertfordſhire dreſſings be procured at an eaſy expence, and the application of that ſubſtitute perfectly underſtood."

From what is above ſtated, as well as from ſeveral obſervations formerly made when deſcribing the various ſorts of manures uſed in theſe kingdoms, the importance of farmers, not ſo fortunately ſituated in regard to the means of procuring large quantities of ſoot, malt-duſt, &c. beſtowing particular attention to finding out and uſing proper ſubſtitutes muſt be generally acknowledged. Of all others, none are likely to be procured in ſuch quantities in the remote parts of Great Britain as the aſhes of peat or turf; which, although not perhaps in every caſe poſſeſſing

poſſeſſing ſuch valuable qualities as was formerly mentioned, as being aſcribed to thoſe procured in Berkſhire, could not fail, if kept dry in houſes conſtructed for the purpoſe till uſed, amply to repay any trifling expence that could be expended in preſerving them in a proper ſtate, and ſowing them over the land in the ſpring. In ſhort, it would prove greatly in favour of agriculture, were the farmers in general to be more aſſiduous in procuring manure, and more attentive in applying it. Were that the caſe, quarries of limeſtone and pits of marl would be diſcovered in almoſt every diſtrict; ſea-ſand and ſea-weeds would be more generally uſed; and the beſt methods of recovering backward crops, by uſing top-dreſſings of various ſorts, would be as generally known in other parts of Great Britain as they are now in Hertfordſhire and ſome neighbouring diſtricts.

VI. *Be particularly careful to improve the breeds of the different ſpecies of live-ſtock.*

It will be univerſally acknowledged, that, a few counties excepted, little attention has been hitherto beſtowed in improving the breeds of the various ſorts of live-ſtock. A diſpoſition to introduce better modes of huſbandry, and to render the ſoil to a greater degree productive, has pretty generally evinced itſelf; but while judicious

cious rotations of cropping are adopted, more or leſs in almoſt every diſtrict, whereby crops uſeful for man and beaſt are alternately cultivated, ſmall is the number of Britiſh farmers who have been as attentive to improving the breeds of live-ſtock as to the cultivation of their farms. This diſpoſition to improve the cultivation of our fields cannot, however, fail to produce in time other beneficial conſequences. Every farmer who acts on prudent principles, will find it neceſſary, as a preparatory ſtep towards improving the ſize and value of his live-ſtock, to increaſe the quantity and quality, as well as the variety, of his green crops. Without abundance of wholeſome nutritive food at all ſeaſons, the beſt breeds of horſes, cattle, or ſheep, will yield an inconſiderable profit, compared to what may be derived when they are furniſhed throughout the year with a ſufficiency of thoſe ſorts of provender to which they are known to be moſt partial. Hence improved agriculture muſt precede improvements in the breeds and value of live-ſtock; and hence, too, there is every reaſon to expect, that as improved modes of culture become more general, the farmer's attention will be naturally turned to breeding thoſe ſorts only whence the greateſt profit can be derived. It is well known, that the governing principle by which the conduct of thoſe farmers is determined, who are in poſſeſſion of farms where live-ſtock is bred and reared, is pro-

fit; conſequently, in proportion as the difference in value, and annual returns between ſuperior and inferior breeds are aſcertained, in the ſame proportion will attention be beſtowed to bring the flocks and herds to that degree of perfection which the ſituation of each particular farm will admit. No perſon can for a moment ſuppoſe it poſſible, that any ſpecies of live-ſtock can be improved to an equal degree on all ſoils and in every ſituation. It is in the more favourably ſituated diſtricts only where the moſt perfect, and of courſe the moſt profitable, varieties of the different ſorts of domeſticated animals can be introduced with a certainty of ſucceſs; yet by proper management improvements may be effected in the breeds of horſes, cattle, and ſheep, in every part of theſe kingdoms; and probably, all circumſtances conſidered, to as great a degree in the remote and comparatively unproductive diſtricts, as in thoſe that are more fertile. It is not therefore the ſtock-farmers who poſſeſs the more valuable lands only, or thoſe who are favourably ſituated in regard to markets, that would derive profit by introducing improved breeds of live-ſtock; every ſtock-farmer in the iſland, wherever or however ſituated, would promote his intereſt by devoting his attention to this important object. Thoſe eſpecially who poſſeſs the mountainous parts of England, Wales, and Scotland, are particularly called upon to be attentive

tentive to this only mean by which their farms can be rendered more valuable. The farmers in theſe diſtricts, it is true, have no reaſon to hope that they will ever be able to introduce with advantage the heavy black cart-horſe of Leiceſterſhire, the large cattle of Lincolnſhire, or ſheep from the banks of the Tees that will weigh 40 or 50 lb. the quarter; the climate, ſoil, and general management, being extremely different, muſt neceſſarily render any ſuch attempt abortive. This is no reaſon, however, why they ſhould be negligent in improving the live-ſtock in the particular diſtricts where they are ſituated. Let them attend to "climate, ſoil, and general management," and there is nothing to prevent them from either improving the native breeds, or introducing new varieties, if that ſhall be deemed more eligible.

The means uſually adopted for improving the breeds of the different ſpecies of live-ſtock are, to ſelect the beſt females from the breeds of the diſtrict, and to croſs them with males of an alien or ſtrange breed. Whether Mr Bakewell adopted this method in improving to ſo great a degree what may be called the Diſhley breed of ſheep, is, and probably ever will remain, a ſecret; although many people ſay, that it was by a croſs with the Ryeland breed that his flock became ſo ſupereminent in ſymmetry of form, diſpoſition to fatten, &c. Be that as it may, it is unqueſtion-

ably true, that for many years before his death he brought his ſheep ſtage by ſtage nearer to perfection, by adopting an oppoſite ſyſtem; namely, breeding, in the Leiceſterſhire phraſe, "in and in," that is, from the beſt individuals of the ſame family. With him it was not uncommon, nor is it with the principal breeders in the county where he reſided, to permit the father and the daughter, the ſon and the mother, the brother and the ſiſter, to improve their own kind.

As a general rule regarding the means to be adopted for improving the breeds of live-ſtock, the following appears to merit the conſideration of every ſtock-farmer in the iſland. If the eſtabliſhed breeds in any particular diſtrict are upon the whole ſuperior to any other that can be introduced, and which, it is believed, will in general be found the caſe, although perhaps greatly degenerated in conſequence of neglect, it becomes the improving farmer's buſineſs to ſelect the beſt females he can find, either in his own or his neighbour's flocks or herds; and as theſe may be imperfect in ſome material points, he ought to ſpare neither trouble nor expence in procuring a male, either of the country or of an alien breed, the beſt qualified in appearance to correct the imperfections that are diſcernible in the females. Having ſo done, it only remains that he ſhould in future ſelect with care and judgment

judgment the ſuperior individuals produced: and thus continuing to breed "in and in," he cannot fail in a few years to reap that reward in the increaſed value of his live-ſtock which ſuperior attention merits, and which it uſually receives.

The advantages that would reſult to farmers in general, were they to beſtow a proper degree of attention to this important branch of huſbandry, would be much greater than many of them are aware. Would it not be for their intereſt to breed and rear horſes, whether for the coach, the road, or the plough, of ſtrength and activity ſufficient for theſe various purpoſes, and with ſuch forms and conſtitutions as that they can be kept in good condition with the ſmalleſt poſſible expenditure of vegetable food, either of herbage, hay, ſtraw, or corn? How much more profitable would it be for farmers to breed well-formed, ſmall-boned cattle, rather than ſuch as are plain, coarſe, large-boned, and ugly? Thoſe of the former deſcription not only fatten quicker, and require leſs food, but, while their fleſh is better in quality, a greater proportion of the weight of the carcaſe conſiſts of prime joints, as rumps, ribs, ſurloins, &c. By what is the Diſhley breed of ſheep diſtinguiſhed from all others? "By their fine lively eyes, clean heads, ſtraight, broad, flat, backs; round (barrel-like) bodies, very fine ſmall bones, thin pelts, and an inclination

tion to make fat at an early age *." Properties theſe which ſtock-farmers in every part of Great Britain muſt acknowledge are eſſential in the form and conſtitution of a valuable breed of ſheep.

In ſhort, viewing the various breeds of live-ſtock as the vehicles, which they certainly are, by which farmers are enabled to ſend their herbage, turnips, &c. to the various market-towns; how much therefore ought they to ſtudy, by the uſe of every proper means, to improve theſe both in form and in diſpoſition to fatten, ſo that the produce of their farms may be diſpoſed of on the moſt advantageous terms?

But beſides the advantages which farmers, as individuals, would derive, were proper atttention generally beſtowed to improve the breeds of the different ſpecies of live-ſtock, thoſe which would reſult to the community at large merit conſideration. Were the breeds of cattle, ſheep, and ſwine, improved in form and in fineneſs of bone, the quantity of offal, or, according to ſome breeders, "non-eſſentials," as legs, ears, horns, bones, &c. would be greatly reduced; and if to this were added a diſpoſition to fatten at an early age, the markets of the country would be more abundantly ſupplied with animal food of ſuperior quality; a more numerous population might be

* See Mr Culley's Treatiſe on Live-ſtock.

be ſupported in the iſland, while foreign nations might be partly ſupplied with the ſuperabundance.

It has been ſaid every inhabitant of England eats a ſheep in the year. Suppoſe the inhabitants of Scotland to do the ſame, and that there are ten millions in both kingdoms. In that caſe, improving the breeds of ſheep to the extent of one ſhilling each (and every perſon will allow this is practicable) would render that ſpecies of live-ſtock alone more valuable by L. 500,000 a-year than it is at preſent. How greatly then might the revenues of this country be augmented? What an immenſe ſource of additional wealth does the improvement of the different ſpecies of live-ſtock open to our view? And how aſſiduous ought proprietors and farmers to be in uſing the proper means to promote, in this reſpect, their own intereſts and that of the community?

VII. *Incloſe ſuch lands as are intended to be cultivated under an alternate courſe of grain and graſs huſbandry; and particularly all ſuch in the fertile parts of the country as are devoted chiefly to paſturage.*

WHATEVER tends to meliorate any particular diſtrict muſt neceſſarily promote the public proſperity; and that incloſing has, in numerous inſtances,

inſtances, produced this effect, will not, it is preſumed, be denied. Incloſing, in all its branches, beſides furniſhing employment for great numbers of the induſtrious peaſantry, renders the ſoil more fertile, and of courſe the neceſſaries of life, as animal and vegetable food, more abundant. In ſo far, therefore, as the riches of a ſtate may be ſaid to conſiſt in the number of its inhabitants, in ſo far is incloſing beneficial in a national point of view; as it is in thoſe countries only where proviſions are cheap, and which can never happen but when they are abundant, that population is to the greateſt degree promoted.

The advantages reſulting to landlords and tenants from incloſing and ſubdividing eſtates and farms, as ſecurity, ſhelter, improvement of live-ſtock, increaſe in the annual value and produce of the ſoil, &c. were formerly mentioned at conſiderable length, as were alſo the obſtacles that appear to prevent the more general introduction of this mean of improvement.

There are ſeveral millions of acres in the mountainous parts of this iſland ſo extremely barren and unproductive, that to attempt to improve them by incloſing would be abſurd in the higheſt degree, as in many diſtricts perhaps four or five hundred years purchaſe of the preſent eſtabliſhed rent would be found inadequate to erect any ſort of permanent fence. In theſe diſtricts much may be done by draining, and by

improving the breeds of the different ſpecies of live-ſtock; but little can be effected by incloſing, except perhaps in a few particular places.

In ſome parts of the low country alſo, as the Carſes of Gowrie, Falkirk, &c. where the climate is favourable, the farms and the fields divided from each other by open drains, and where the ſoil is found ſo much better adapted for tillage than for grazing, that four or five crops of grain are taken for every one of graſs, incloſing with hedges may be deemed in a great meaſure unneceſſary. But in the culturable part of Great Britain at large, eſpecially where the lands are kept under an alternate courſe of grain and graſs huſbandry, or where they are devoted chiefly to paſturage, incloſing ought not to be neglected, as what may be termed the perfection of Britiſh agriculture, viz. the uniting the improvement of the breeds of live-ſtock with the due cultivation of the ſoil, never has been, nor never can be, eſtabliſhed on an open-field or unincloſed farm.

VIII. *Drain off all ſuperfluous Water.*

There is no way in which money can be expended in improving a farm that is naturally wet, whence the returns are more certain, ſpeedy, or abundant, than when judiciouſly applied for the purpoſe of effecting a complete drainage. While a ſuperabundance of moiſture remains in

the ſoil, no exertions, however fertile it may naturally be in itſelf, can render it to a great degree productive. Much, no doubt, has been done in theſe kingdoms in the way of improving lands by open and under-drains; but it muſt alſo be admitted, that, notwithſtanding the benefits that are known to reſult therefrom, much ſtill remains to be done. None but the moſt ignorant farmers will plough or harrow lands when wet; while, at the ſame time, all are convinced of the advantages attending early ſowing, eſpecially in cold expoſed ſituations: yet in how many inſtances do farmers neglect uſing the only mean, namely, draining off the ſuperfluous water, by which they can be enabled to plough their lands in proper condition, and to ſow the ſeed in due ſeaſon.

The effects reſulting from the introduction of a general ſpirit for draining are thus deſcribed by the gentleman who writes the Report of the County of Somerſet: "The profit which has attended the improvement already practiſed during the laſt twenty years is, I ſhould think, a ſufficient incentive. Scarcely a farmer can now be found who does not poſſeſs a conſiderable landed property; and many, whoſe fathers lived in idleneſs and ſloth on the precarious ſupport of a few half-ſtarved cows or a few limping geeſe, are now in affluence, and bleſſed with every needful ſpecies of enjoyment. Diſorders

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of the body, to which the ſtagnant waters heretofore ſubjected them, are now ſcarcely known, and the inhabitants for the moſt part arrive at a good old age." Effects nearly ſimilar may be ſaid to have been produced in the Carſe of Gowrie, in conſequence of proper attention having been beſtowed in forming the neceſſary drains in that diſtrict; and ſuch will ever be the reſult, where a country, or a particular farm of naturally fertile ſoil, but encumbered with ſuperabundant moiſture, is laid ſufficiently dry for the purpoſes of cultivation or paſturage.

Many other inſtances, were it neceſſary, might be mentioned, in which the conſtitutions of the inhabitants of a diſtrict have been improved, and their wealth greatly increaſed, by means of effecting a complete drainage; and ſtill a great many more in which the tenants of particular farms have enriched themſelves by a liberal but judicious expenditure of money in effecting this very eſſential improvement. There are few proprietors or farmers in theſe kingdoms who have not experienced more or leſs, on their own eſtates or farms, the benefits derived from well conſtructed drains; or who have it not in their power to ſatisfy themſelves in their immediate neighbourhood that ſuch do actually reſult. That being the caſe, it is unneceſſary to enlarge on the ſubject; as, if experience, example, and conviction, are not ſufficient to ſtimulate them in-

to action, it is not to be expected that any thing which can be ſtated by way of advice or recommendation will with ſuch people have any effect.

IX. *Form embankments for the purpoſe of reclaiming lands lying along the ſea-ſhores, or adjoining the courſes of rivers.*

The immenſe addition that has been made to the extent of productive lands in ſeveral counties of England, by means of embankments judiciouſly and ſubſtantially conſtructed, and the benefits which the proprietors derive from that mean of improvement having been adopted, are well known. It appears therefore ſurpriſing, that thoſe poſſeſſing lands occaſionally overflowed either by the ſea or by rivers in other parts of theſe kingdoms ſhould not follow ſo laudable an example; and by erecting embankments, render ſuch lands as are at preſent of no value to a high degree productive. Were they to view a neighbouring country (Holland), and ſee what art, induſtry, and exertion, are capable of effecting, in regard to reclaiming valuable lands from the ſea, and in ſecuring others from the injury that might be expected to ariſe from rivers overflowing their banks, they would be convinced how much they had it in their power to increaſe their own annual

nual income and the territorial revenue of the country.

The beſt methods of embanking lands, in ſo far as there was any reaſon to ſuppoſe farmers could ever be called upon to be individually concerned, has already been particularly deſcribed; and they are ſuch, if adopted, as will in every caſe be attended with the moſt beneficial conſequences. But beſides numerous improvements on a ſmall ſcale, which active and enterpriſing tenants might make by means of embanking, were they aſſured of permanency of poſſeſſion for ſuch a period as to repay the expence of labour, and afford a ſufficient recompenſe for their trouble, immenſe improvements might be effected in this way, were it poſſible to rouſe the proprietors of many parts of Great Britain from that ſtate of ſloth and indolence into which, unfortunately for the proſperity of the nation, they ſeem to have fallen. How many hundred thouſand acres of naturally fertile fen or marſh land might be converted into uſeful tillage and paſture-fields, which are now occaſionally overflowed by the ſea or by rivers, were money judiciouſly expended, with a view of protecting them from future encroachments and depredations? How many people might be profitably employed in the cultivation and management of theſe lands? And what an immenſe addition might they be made to yield to the ordinary

nary ſupply of the public markets of the country? To theſe queſtions it is impoſſible for any perſon to give a proper anſwer, or indeed to form any probable conjecture on the ſubject, who has not travelled through the fens of Lincolnſhire, and viſited the Hundreds of Eſſex. There the buſineſs of embanking is more generally practiſed and better underſtood than in any other part of the iſland; but even there, owing to many concurring circumſtances, negligence ſeems to be the order of the day; at leaſt the reports of both theſe diſtricts reprobate, in pretty ſtrong terms, the preſent eſtabliſhed mode of managing embankments. The writer of the Report of the county of Lincoln recommends to the proprietors to apply for an act of parliament to take the management of the embanking and draining the very valuable and extenſive tract of low marſh land ſituated in that county from the commiſſioners of ſewers, who at preſent have the charge; and that the management of both theſe operations ſhould be placed in the hands of three or more commiſſioners, well ſkilled in the art of embanking and draining, who ſhould be ſubject to the proprietors controul, and removeable for miſconduct. He alſo ſuggeſts the propriety of dividing this extenſive fen into two or more diſtricts, and of connecting the embanking and draining of each diſtrict together as if it was the property of one well-regulated family,

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making each reſpective part of the property contribute its ſhare of expence in proportion to its ſhare of advantages to be derived from any improvements. He then concludes thus: "If a plan of this kind were to be adopted, we ſhould not ſee the occupiers of a frontage town letting their bank fall from wilful neglect, in order that, when it ſhall be condemned (by the commiſſioners of ſewers), the whole level may contribute to the expence of a new one; in which expence their ſhare would be leſs, as part of a large diſtrict, than otherwiſe in doing their duty by upholding their embankment as occupiers of a frontage town. We ſhould not ſee the water held up by narrow paſſages, and crooked rivulets overflowing large tracts of high land, from the fear of letting it down upon works below, incompetent to carry it to the ſea. We ſhould not ſee ſome towns well drained, whilſt others adjoining to them equally capable are overflowed. All theſe evils may be ſpeedily cured, and an immenſe general ſaving had, by adopting a plan ſimilar to this I recommend: For, by connecting the draining and embanking a whole country together, the works will be conſtantly attended to and well ſecured; the water will be collected together and carried off in larger bodies to the ſea, by which means it will have competent power to ſcour out the outfals." Whether the plan above deſcribed be the beſt that can poſſibly

be deviſed for remedying the evils complained of, the writer will not take upon himſelf to determine, although it appears to be arranged on equitable principles. At any rate, the preſent mode of management is to ſo great a degree defective, that there can be no queſtion about the propriety of adopting ſome other more likely to be attended with effect. Nor could this be a difficult matter, were individual proprietors to ſacrifice a portion of their private intereſt with a view of promoting the general improvement of the country; but as this is not in every caſe to be expected, the intervention of the legiſlature in ſome ſhape or other ſeems indiſpenſably neceſſary.

There are no waſtes of any deſcription capable of being improved to a greater degree than marſh or fen land on the ſea-coaſt, and meadows or low lying lands that are occaſionally overflowed by rivers. Of the former there are very large tracts in the ſouth and eaſt parts of England, and of the latter many thouſand acres along the banks of rivers in the interior parts of both kingdoms; a great portion of which, although capable of improvement, are allowed to remain in a comparatively unproductive ſtate. To erect proper embankments, to cut the neceſſary drains, and to keep both in a perfect ſtate of repair, would, no doubt, in many inſtances, be attended with conſiderable expence; but the returns from ſuch lands

lands would be ſo abundant as to afford an ample recompenſe to the public-ſpirited proprietors, who poſſeſs good ſenſe ſufficient judiciouſly to conduct, and ſubſtantially to complete, ſuch undertakings.

X. *Aboliſh the abſurd practice of paring and burning.*

THIS pernicious practice, it was formerly obſerved, continues to be too generally eſtabliſhed in England, although totally aboliſhed in Scotland. Pernicious it may well be called; for although it may not be attended with all the bad effects that ſome have ſtated as reſulting from it, yet it is demonſtrable that this method of preparing land for the production of grain is never adopted on any farm where a rotation of cropping, the beſt calculated to render it to the higheſt degree productive, is eſtabliſhed. When landlords are obſtinate in preventing their tenants from breaking up graſs-grounds in proper time, or when tenants are careleſs and inattentive in laying out theſe grounds again into graſs, the practice may in ſuch caſes be defended. But it may be aſked, are ſuch landlords the encouragers, or ſuch tenants the practiſers, of good huſbandry? No; the very reverſe is the caſe. Eſtabliſh judicious rotations of cropping, whereby the lands will be made to produce grain, graſs, turnips,

&c. alternately, and paring and burning will get out of faſhion. Continue to adhere to the imperfect modes of management above alluded to, and paring and burning will ſtill be ranked as firſt-rate improvements. To render this the caſe, it ſeems neceſſary, however, that the predilection for ancient cuſtoms and prejudices, ſo loudly and ſo generally complained of, as tending to obſtruct the introduction of better modes of huſbandry, ſhould continue to obſcure the ſight and darken the underſtanding both of proprietors and farmers. Thoſe who are capable of ſeeing clearly, and of judging without partiality or prejudice, may, by ſurveying a well-cultivated farm, under a proper rotation of cropping, eaſily ſatisfy themſelves that paring and burning are requiſite or proper only where the proprietors are too obſtinate, or the tenants too ignorant to purſue better methods; and that good cultivation and proper arrangement, in regard to the order in which one crop ſhould ſucceed another, completely prevents the neceſſity of having recourſe to theſe extraordinary means of preparing land for tillage.

Mr Marſhall, who, in deſcribing the Rural Economy of Yorkſhire, appears a ſtrenuous advocate for paring and burning, delivers his ſentiments on that ſubject, when giving an account of the huſbandry of the weſt of England, with more circumſpection. In the courſe of ſome general

general remarks on paring and burning, or, as he calls it, "sod-burning," as applying to the practice of West Devonshire, he observes, "There needs not a better proof that the practice (of sod-burning), under the guidance of discretion, is not *destructive* to soils, nor any way *dangerous* to agriculture, than the fact so fully ascertained here, that after constant use of it, during perhaps a long succession of ages, the soil still continues to be productive; and under management, in other respects much below par, continues to yield a rent equivalent to that drawn from lands of equal quality in more enlightened districts: and there appears to me strong reason to imagine, that, *under the present course of management*, sod-burning is essential to success *. With such reservations as are here specified, every intelligent farmer will agree with Mr Marshall, however much they might have been disposed to differ from him had he given his unqualified approbation to the practice; but he goes no farther than to say, that under the present course of management in that district, and which he describes as being "much below par," sod-burning is essential to success; nay, in the succeeding page but one he concedes the point still more, by stating, that "Whenever *clean fallows* and suitable *fallow-crops* shall be introduced and judiciously

* Rural Economy of the West of England, vol. i. p. 147.

mixed with the grain-crops, agreeably to the practice of modern huſbandry, *burning-beat* will certainly be no longer required." In other words, that it is only in the diſtricts where agriculture is in a languid ſtate, and where modern improvements are little known, or not thoroughly underſtood, that this, although ancient, yet ſlovenly and unhuſband-like, method of preparing land for the plough continues to be adopted.

XI. *Wherever the quality of the Water has been aſcertained, adopt as generally as poſſible the beneficial practice of irrigating or flooding Graſs Lands.*

The artificially irrigating, flooding, or watering of land, as a mean of increaſing its fertility, is a practice that has been long eſtabliſhed in ſome few particular diſtricts, and whence the moſt ſingularly beneficial effects have followed; yet it is a practice little known in ſeveral parts of Great Britain, and which in many more was never heard of till after the eſtabliſhment of the Board of Agriculture. It may therefore be conſidered, with much propriety, as one of thoſe beneficial practices which that Board has brought into the view of the proprietors and farmers of theſe kingdoms at large. When treating formerly of this ſubject, the various circumſtances neceſſary to be attended to in watering

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ing or flooding land, as well as the numerous advantages that have been proved from experience to result, in particular diſtricts, from adopting this method of fertilising the ſoil, were particularized. It may not be improper to call to the reader's remembrance what is before ſtated on this part of the ſubject, in ſo far at leaſt as to remark, that as all water does not poſſeſs the ſame quality, it would be a prudent meaſure in the firſt inſtance to aſcertain to what degree that which can be commanded has the power of rendering land more fertile. This is neceſſary with a view of guarding the unexperienced practitioner from expending labour and money in preparing his fields for watering, when, from the indifferent, or perhaps pernicious, quality of the water which he has in his power to command, no good conſequences can enſue. Wherever water has been proved to poſſeſs a fertilizing quality, a judicious application of it in flooding or watering the adjoining lands will be found a meaſure calculated to render them more productive than they could be made by the uſe of any other means. Keeping in view the above-mentioned hint, watering of land may, in numerous inſtances, be attended with certain profit to individuals, and at the ſame time facilitate, in a conſiderable degree, the general improvement of the country.

XII.

XII. *Improve the Climate in expoſed ſituations, by ſurrounding the Tillage and Paſture Fields with extenſive Plantations.*

BESIDES the advantages ariſing from planting waſte and otherwiſe unproductive lands, derived from the ſale of the trees at a future period, another of conſiderable importance, and more early attainable, is frequently derived. Such plantations, when judiciouſly formed, may ſerve as a ſcreen to the arable and paſture fields, when, from the badneſs of the climate and their elevated ſituation, ſhelter becomes requiſite. The improvements that have been effected in the northern parts of Scotland, in meliorating the ſoil of many diſtricts, by furrounding the cultivated lands with extenſive plantations of Scotch firs and other trees that are adapted to poor ſoils, and that will thrive in expoſed ſituations, are ſo great, as ought to induce proprietors in other parts of Great Britain, where the climate is ſo unfavourable as to retard vegetation, and in ſome ſeaſons to prevent the crops from arriving at maturity, to endeavour to improve by art what nature in this reſpect has left defective. On the utility of forming plantations for the purpoſe above-mentioned, it is unneceſſary to enlarge; experience has long ſince decided the point.

Larch and Scotch fir will endure almoſt any ſeverity of climate, and are therefore the trees of all others the moſt likely to thrive in bleak elevated ſituations. When the grounds to be planted are ſituated near the ſea, conſiderable numbers of beech, as being capable of reſiſting the bad effects that uſually ariſe from ſea-breezes, ought to be added. Theſe ſorts of trees ſhould be planted out on ſuch grounds when young, and more than ordinary cloſe to each other. When theſe directions are attended to, and the plantations made of ſuch ſufficient breadth as that the trees may not only prove a ſhelter to each other when young, but, when advanced in ſize, to the adjacent country, and when the plantations are thinned early and frequently, ſo that the remaining trees may be gradually inured to bear without injury that degree of cold to which they muſt neceſſarily be expoſed, there is every reaſon to expect they will become profitable to the owners, and ornamental and uſeful to the country around. In ſhort, were the practice of planting the elevated parts of the country more generally adopted, the climate would be ſo much improved that the tillage and paſture lands would be rendered greatly more productive, while an additional ſecurity would be obtained for reaping in due ſeaſon the fruits of the year.

Such are the hints the writer has judged proper

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per to throw out, with a view of calling the attention of proprietors and farmers to the more general improvement of the country. Were the obſtacles formerly mentioned removed, and theſe means adopted, it would ſcarcely be poſſible to ſet bounds to the agricultural proſperity of theſe kingdoms, or to form an idea of the immenſe additional reſources which ſkill, induſtry, and perſeverance, are capable of drawing forth for the ſervice of the ſtate, and for the recompenſe of thoſe individuals by whoſe exertions theſe improvements, if carried on, muſt be effected. It muſt, however, appear obvious to every perſon in the leaſt degree acquainted with the preſent ſtate of agriculture in Great Britain, conſidering the ſhort duration of the leaſes commonly granted, and the uncertainty which farmers muſt feel in regard to permanency of poſſeſſion, that under ſuch circumſtances many of the meaſures above recommended ſhould be adopted by them. The truth is, that unleſs the proprietors come forward and take an active concern in effecting theſe improvements, there is every reaſon to believe the period is yet far diſtant when the Britiſh territory ſhall be improved to that degree of which it is capable.

Some of the meaſures above ſuggeſted, as planting, forming embankments, &c. ought, in every inſtance, to be executed at the proprietor's expence, and under the ſuperintendance of his

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agent. There are others, as erecting farm-buildings, incloſing, draining, &c. which, when done at the farmer's expence, requires the expenditure of larger ſums than they in general are able conveniently to advance, and which ought therefore to be effected at the joint expence of the parties. On a leaſe of moderate endurance (21 years, for inſtance), it may be conſidered a good general rule, that the proprietor ſhould advance ſuch ſum or ſums as may be requiſite for the payment of materials and tradeſmens wages, and that the tenant ſhould furniſh all neceſſary carriages at his own expence; ſo that while the tenant is allowed to reſerve his capital for the purpoſes to which it ought to be applied, the proprietor is eaſed of a great part of the expence which otherwiſe would be neceſſarily incurred in carrying on theſe operations. While proprietors ought, on the one hand, to eſtabliſh judicious modes of cropping, and to aboliſh the abſurd practice of paring and burning, both proprietors and tenants ought to bend their attention to introduce the uſe of the moſt improved implements of huſbandry, and to be careful to improve the breeds of the different ſpecies of live-ſtock; and tenants in particular ſhould be attentive to the hours of labour, and to the accumulation of as great a quantity of manure as poſſible. By thus acting, proprietors and tenants will diſcharge their reſpective duties to each o-

ther, to their families, and to the public; and while they do ſo, they will enſure, as far as in the nature of human affairs it is poſſible to do, the improvement of the country.

Having now as briefly as poſſible thrown out ſome hints regarding the leading particulars to be attended to, in order to effect the further improvement of the country, it is intended, before cloſing the chapter, to make ſome remarks on the beſt means to be adopted for encouraging that ſpirit for introducing new and better modes of huſbandry which appears at preſent in many diſtricts ſo general.

XIII. *A ſpirit for agricultural improvement, how it may be ſtill more generally excited.*

THAT ſuch a ſpirit does at the preſent period appear to be excited, and that generally too, at leaſt among proprietors and farmers in particular diſtricts, and to a degree hitherto unknown in the annals of Great Britain, is a fact well eſtabliſhed. There are, however, ſeveral extenſive diſtricts where both proprietors and tenants remain in the moſt torpid ſtate, inſomuch that it will require the utmoſt exertions of the legiſlature and the Board of Agriculture to rouſe them into action. To point out the means by which this can be beſt effected ſhall be the ſubject of ſome following pages. In the mean time, it ought

to

to be remarked, that unleſs the legiſlature ſhall turn its attention to the removal of thoſe obſtacles that have already been particularly deſcribed as operating againſt the improvement of the country; and unleſs the proprietors ſhall come to the general reſolution of allowing the farmers to act more as free agents, by granting them leaſes of moderate endurance—every other means of introducing into, or eſtabliſhing in, the minds of that claſs of men a diſpoſition to adopt the new and more improved modes of huſbandry muſt be attended with conſequences ſuch as may be expected to reſult from attempts ſo impotent in their nature, and ſo little calculated to heal the wounds which the agriculture of theſe kingdoms, from inattention in theſe reſpects, has already received: In ſhort, they can be of no avail.

Farmers are very frequently charged with being ſtupid, obſtinate, and attached to ancient cuſtoms. Although ſuch accuſations, when generally applied to any claſs or deſcription of men, are always improper, as never being ſtrictly true; yet it cannot be diſputed, that, in regard to a great proportion of the cultivators of the Britiſh ſoil, theſe charges are but too applicable. The reaſon is obvious. Although in every county there are many farmers who, from the intelligence, activity, and liberality of ſentiment which they poſſeſs, would do honour to any profeſſion;

ſtill it muſt be acknowledged, that the majority, from having been deprived of a ſuitable education, having little buſineſs to call them from home, and very few opportunities of viſiting diſtant diſtricts, remain in conſequence in a great meaſure, if not entirely, ignorant of the improvements going forward in other parts of the iſland, and equally ſo of the manner in which theſe have been effected. Bred up with very confined ideas, both in regard to thinking and to acting, it is no wonder, partly for the reaſons above-mentioned, and partly through that prejudice which, ſo ſituated, they muſt neceſſarily poſſeſs for the cuſtoms of their fathers (which in time naturally become their own), that improvements in agriculture ſhould move on more ſlowly than thoſe in the other arts. The manufactures of the country, for inſtance, could ſcarcely be carried on at all with ſucceſs but under the direction of people who had acquired a good education, and who, in conſequence of their intercourſe with mankind, had become diveſted of all local prejudices.

It is indeed true, that the more intelligent farmers, in many inſtances, have introduced improvements, and adopted the better practices of other diſtricts, with advantage to themſelves and to the public. But unleſs the clouds of ignorance, under which the prejudices entertained by the deſcription of tenants above-mentioned

were nurſed, are by ſome means diſpelled, they will, in all probability, continue to conſider ſuch deviations from *the good old beaten tract* as acts of folly rather than of propriety. It therefore appears neceſſary, in order to excite what may be called a general ſpirit for improvement, that proper meaſures ſhould be adopted for diſſeminating as widely as poſſible agricultural knowledge.

Of books on the theory and practice of this art there are abundance; but few, very few, are calculated to convey uſeful local information. In conducting the operations of huſbandry, ſo much depends on ſoil, climate, ſeaſons, and numerous other circumſtances, that it is almoſt impoſſible that directions laid down in books of agriculture, written by thoſe who confine their obſervations to the practices of the particular diſtricts where they reſide, can ever become uſeful to that practical farmer who, in regard to ſoil, climate, &c. is very differently ſituated. Since the eſtabliſhment of the Board of Agriculture a maſs of knowledge has been obtained, which no private individual could ever have become poſſeſſed of, even by the moſt extraordinary exertions.—What meaſures the members of that Board intend to take in order to diſſeminate the knowledge ſo acquired, the writer has no acceſs to know. That it is their intention to do ſo by ſome means or other, and

more

more generally than they have hitherto done, no perſon can doubt. It would be prepoſterous to ſuppoſe, that any general benefit could be derived from purſuing the plan they ſeem for the preſent to have adopted; namely, that of ſelling the reprinted Reports of each county at 5 or 6 ſhillings the copy. There are eighty-five counties in England, Wales, and Scotland; conſequently a complete ſet of the reprinted Reports would coſt above *twenty guineas*. While the information obtained by the Board ſhall continue to be held at ſuch *an extraordinary price*, there is no reaſon to ſuppoſe the Britiſh farmers will be much benefited thereby; and leſs ſtill for thinking that by ſuch means the clouds of ignorance, which cauſe in the minds of ordinary farmers ſo great a predilection for ancient cuſtoms, will ever be removed. Without other meaſures be adopted, they muſt live and die in the poſſeſſion of theſe prejudices, however much their doing ſo may operate againſt the beſt intereſts of the country.

To render the information contained in theſe Reports beneficial to the nation, it appears indiſpenſably neceſſary that every ordinary farmer, thoſe for inſtance poſſeſſing 30, 40, or 50 acres, ſhould ſomehow or other be put in poſſeſſion of it. Without this be done, it will remain, like gold in the bowels of the earth, of no value to them, whatever effects the exertions of the members of the

the Board may have in ſpreading a ſpirit of improvement among the more intelligent farmers. A ſmall number only of thoſe who are at preſent regulated in their conduct by ancient prejudices, can be expected to derive much benefit or knowledge from the inſtitution of that Board, unleſs the members will promulgate the information which they may from time to time obtain.

The writer has long been convinced, that, for the purpoſe of conveying uſeful information to farmers in the middle and lower ranks, the inſtruction of which he has at preſent chiefly in view, periodical publications, ſuch as the Muſeum Ruſticum, the Scots Farmer, the Annals of Agriculture, &c. if executed with judgment, are more likely to be attended with ſucceſs than many others which, to the more intelligent, may appear to poſſeſs ſuperior merit. It is in vain, in his opinion, to expect that men, who are little in in the habit of reading, and who cannot reaſon on cauſes or effects, are to be informed by a peruſal of abſtract diſquiſitions on any ſubject. If ſuch men are to be inſtructed, it muſt be by a plain, ſimple, unadorned, detail of facts, which ought to be made as conciſe and diſtinct as poſſible; while, at the ſame time, the propriety of their attending to theſe facts ſhould be enforced by ſuch reaſons as are within their comprehenſion, and which, on once examining, they can eaſily comprehend.

If

If theſe obſervations be well-founded, there is perhaps no method the Board of Agriculture can deviſe for the circulation of knowledge on ſubjects connected with huſbandry, that carries with it a greater probability of ſucceſs, than were they to eſtabliſh a ſociety of three or four people, reſpectable for their knowledge of the various practices adopted in different diſtricts, and who, from their general acquaintance, would inſure a very extenſive correſpondence with people moſt eminent in the farming line throughout the iſland. It ſhould be the buſineſs of ſuch a Society to publiſh an Agricultural Periodical Journal, under the patronage and ſanction of the Board; and which ſhould, in the firſt place, be made to contain a conciſe account of the different methods of carrying on the various operations of huſbandry in both kingdoms. This, with ſuch additional information as the Board would be daily receiving, together with uſeful hints from correſpondents, would afford abundant materials for ſuch a publication for many years. With a view that it might with more certainty get into the hands of thoſe (the middle and lower claſſes of farmers) who would be moſt benefited by a peruſal of it, it ſhould be ſold on the loweſt poſſible terms, that is, for the expence of paper and print. One of theſe journals ſhould be publiſhed regularly every fortnight or three weeks; and as the Board does not want the means of forwarding them

them at a trifling expence, nor the proprietors of the country influence ſufficient to induce their tenants of all deſcriptions to become regular purchaſers, the extent of the circulation would be immenſe, and the advantages reſulting therefrom would be greater than can at preſent be well imagined. Such a publication, conducted as, under ſuch circumſtances, it no doubt would be, coming from ſo high authority, and circulated regularly and to ſuch an extent in every diſtrict, would have a moſt aſtoniſhing effect in diveſting the great body of farmers of that partiality for ancient cuſtoms which is ſo generally complained of, and which, while it remains, were every other obſtacle removed, will ſtill retard the improvement of the country. Were ſome ſuch plan as this adopted, farmers in general would not only ſoon become open to conviction, but ſolicitous to obtain a greater ſhare of uſeful information. Theſe diſpoſitions would alſo naturally pave the way for what, in the writer's opinion, ought to be the next meaſure adopted, with a view of exciting a general ſpirit for improvements, namely, the eſtabliſhment of agricultural ſocieties.

It is long ſince ſocieties for promoting improvements in agriculture were eſtabliſhed in ſome parts of Great Britain. It is probable the moſt ancient one in Scotland was that which met at Ormiſton in Eaſt Lothian, and which is taken notice of in

the Statiſtical Account of Cranſton in the following words:

"Sir John Dalrymple of Coreſland and Mr Cockburn of Ormiſton, both of them diſtinguiſhed by zeal for their country and a paſſion for agriculture, eſtabliſhed a Society at Ormiſton, which had for its object the improvement of huſbandry. Beſides actual farmers, perſons of the firſt rank in the country were proud of being inrolled as members of that club. The Duke of Perth and John Earl of Stair regularly attended its monthly meetings*."

The agricultural ſocieties in England, ſo far as the writer has been able to learn, are all of modern inſtitution. In the Report of Brecknockſhire in Wales, mention is made of a reſpectable agricultural ſociety in that county, which was inſtituted upwards of forty years ago. And it is to the exertions of the members of that Society, both individually and collectively, that the reporter aſcribes the rapid advancement which agriculture

* It is not a little remarkable, that while the former nobleman, the Duke of Perth, during the rebellion 1745, was employed in deluging his native country with blood, by fighting the battles of the Stuart family, he at the ſame time evinced a ſolicitous regard for its agricultural improvement, by ſending a guard of ſoldiers to protect the perſons of the members of the above-mentioned Society at their monthly meetings; a moſt convincing proof that in the other caſe he acted on *what he conceived* principles of propriety and juſtice.

culture has made in ſome particular parts of that diſtrict ſince the period above-mentioned.

The moſt extenſively uſeful agricultural ſociety at preſent in Great Britain, is that eſtabliſhed ſome time ago at Bath, called "The Bath and Weſt of England Society." Under the direction of the ſecretary of that Society, ſeven or eight volumes of very valuable miſcellaneous papers, on various ſubjects connected with huſbandry, have been publiſhed; a peruſal of which will ſatisfy every perſon that much care and judgment have been exerciſed in the ſelection.

There have been two ſocieties alſo lately eſtabliſhed in Edinburgh; the one, which has for its object the improvement of wool, is denominated "The Britiſh Wool Society;" and the other, which was eſtabliſhed for the purpoſe of improving the huſbandry of the Highlands of Scotland, is known by the name of "The Highland Society." How far theſe ſocieties have anſwered the ends propoſed by their inſtitution, none but the members are capable of forming any judgment. But as, in the writer's opinion, the uſefulneſs of all ſuch ſocieties is in a great meaſure to be calculated by the extent of agricultural knowledge which they communicate, and as few or no publications have hitherto been made by either of theſe two above-mentioned, it is to be preſumed that, however much the members themſelves may have become enlightened, their exertions

have hitherto had but little influence in regard to introducing generally new and better modes of husbandry.

Agricultural societies of every description, except in a few particular cases, where the influence of the members had the effect to procure accurate information respecting the practices of other districts, were till of late extremely limited in their powers of doing good, or of promoting the objects they had in view. Previous to the establishment of the Board of Agriculture, the knowledge of the methods generally adopted in the various parts of the island for carrying on the operations of husbandry, were little known beyond the narrow limits of the district where they were established. In regard to a knowledge of the modes in which a particular operation was conducted in different districts, all was doubt and uncertainty. The case is, by the exertions of that Board, very much altered: The practices of every district are now so minutely described, that an intelligent farmer, by the perusal of the printed Reports, and by comparing one with another, and with the practices most prevalent in the district where he resides, has it in his power to obtain such a fund of information as cannot fail to render him a more valuable member of such a society than he could have been by any other means.

That a society, or societies in each county composed

compoſed of proprietors and principal farmers, muſt tend greatly to the diſſemination of uſeful knowledge, every perſon muſt be ſatisfied. Such ſocieties, when the members poſſeſs a thorough knowledge of agriculture in general, and a juſt ſenſe of the importance of the cauſe, for the promotion of which they had become united, and having alſo the means (as, if ſuch periodical journals as above-mentioned were regularly publiſhed, they would have) of procuring much valuable authentic information, as well from various parts of theſe as from other kingdoms, would have it in their power to render the moſt eſſential ſervices to mankind in general. The members, while they communicated their ſentiments and the reſult of their experiments to each other, would not only thereby receive inſtruction themſelves, but they would alſo be the means, through the medium of the propoſed agricultural journals, of diſperſing the knowledge of many important facts relating to huſbandry throughout theſe kingdoms, or rather throughout the civilized world at large. "Would gentlemen (ſays a ſenſible writer in the Scots Farmer) turn their attention to theſe things, a very great improvement would ſoon appear upon their eſtates at a very trifling expence to themſelves; and they would have the heart-felt ſatisfaction of promoting the happineſs of their tenants, and the good of the public, along with their

their own intereſt:" And he adds, "I cannot help thinking that a gentleman of fortune, preſiding at the head of a Board, and all his tenants around him, with hearts full of admiration at his condeſcenſion, and of gratitude for his goodneſs, muſt appear to the thinking part of mankind in a more ſplendid and brilliant character, than if he was to preſide at an aſſembly or a ball of the firſt gentry, or to hold the firſt place at a King's court *."

The firſt object of theſe provincial ſocieties, like that of the Board of Agriculture, ought to be to excite a ſpirit of inquiry among the middle and lower ranks of farmers: were that effected, it would render the publication of agricultural journals peculiarly proper and advantageous. Of this we have the moſt convincing evidence in the conduct of the peaſantry and artificers in Scotland, in regard to another particular. By ſome artful means a ſpirit of political inquiry was lately excited among them, whereby they became extremely anxious for information. By the circulation of low-priced publications on the ſubject of politics, they were gratified to the utmoſt extent of their wiſhes. The conſequences that have reſulted are well known; they have almoſt to a man become politicians. Were equal pains taken in regard to agricultural affairs,

* Scots Farmer, vol. i, p. 289.

affairs, ſimilar conſequences would neceſſarily enſue; and the Britiſh farmers would ſoon be entitled generally to the denomination of intelligent and expert huſbandmen.

The next meaſure to which the members of ſuch ſocieties ought to turn their attention, is to encourage a ſpirit of emulation, by conferring in ſome caſes honorary, and in others pecuniary, rewards on thoſe who, by the diſplay of ſuperior ſkill or exertion, ſhall be found beſt entitled to receive them. It is by the proper diſtribution of premiums that agricultural ſocieties are likely to become generally uſeful in any diſtrict. Premiums for the beſt conſtructed implements of huſbandry, for the beſt ploughed field, for the beſt breeds of horſes, cattle and ſheep; to the farmer whoſe farm ſhall be found on inſpection to be upon the whole in the beſt ſtate of management, &c. would have the effect to excite a ſpirit of emulation and improvement among all ranks. But it is neceſſary to remark, that premiums ſhould be deviſed with great caution, and by thoſe only who have a perfect knowledge of the ſubject. Premiums may be moſt impartially adjudged and beſtowed; yet, unleſs the arrangement be both judicious and comprehenſive, the beneficial conſequences reſulting therefrom may be very limited. Without care be taken in this reſpect, a ſmall number only of the farmers of any diſtrict can become competitors with any well

well founded probability of ſucceſs. In the Report of the County of Brecknock, before-mentioned, it is ſtated, "That nine-tenths of the inhabitants of that county have no chance of ever being benefited by the diſtributions of the premiums given by the agricultural ſociety to thoſe who excel in the various branches of huſbandry, as they can never preſume to become candidates." And it is added, "The occupiers of the ſmall portion of good land, which this county contains, muſt always have the premiums. The inhabitants of the hilly parts in ſome places ſcarcely yet know that there is ſuch a ſociety in exiſtence; ſo little intercourſe is there between the inhabitants of the rich and poor diſtricts of this county." It is unneceſſary to make any obſervations on the impolicy of adopting ſuch a line of conduct; it muſt be ſufficiently obvious, and cannot therefore be too much guarded againſt by the members of thoſe ſocieties, who wiſh, by their labours, to promote to the greateſt degree the improvement of the country.

The only other particular that appears to merit attention, as a mean by which a general ſpirit for agricultural improvements may be moſt effectually introduced, is the eſtabliſhment of experimental farms. This meaſure was formerly hinted at, as being one that there was every reaſon to believe would be attended with good conſequences, in regard to determining with preciſion

ciſion the proper quantities of the different manures that ought to be applied to the various ſoils, the kinds beſt adapted to each, and the effects they produce when applied ſingly or in their compounded ſtate *. But the utility of public experimental farms in every county, if put under the management of men of extenſive knowledge and experience, ought not to be eſtimated by a reference to any particular branch: Huſbandry, in all its branches, would be greatly improved by ſuch eſtabliſhments. And ſhould the period ever arrive when the obſtacles before-mentioned ſhall be removed, and proper means adopted for diffuſing a general knowledge of the beſt modes of conducting the various operations connected with that ſcience, the one now ſuggeſted will not be omitted. Such farms would become ſo many ſeminaries, at which youth might be inſtructed in the art of agriculture; and to which alſo the practical farmer would occaſionally reſort for information, regarding the ſucceſs of experiments made as it were under his own eye, and on ſoils and in ſituations ſimilar to his own.—Mr Marſhal, in his Rural Economy of the Midland Counties, has thrown out many uſeful hints on this very intereſting ſubject. He ſtates the advantages which the farmers of Great Britain at large would receive

* See vol. ii. p. 258.

from the eſtabliſhment of farms of this deſcription in the following words: "What man, whether of the ſuperior claſs of yeomanry or tenants, or of the ſuperior claſs of tradeſmen or others, who are now bringing up their ſons to huſbandry, would not, after his ſon had gone through a courſe of private tuition, and received the rudiments of inſtruction from himſelf or ſome profeſſional friend, wiſh to perfect his education in a public ſeminary; where he would have not only an opportunity of ſeeing practice in its higheſt ſtate of improvement, and of converſing with profeſſional men of the moſt enlightened underſtanding; but where he would be duly initiated in the theory of rural knowledge, in the method of making, regiſtering, and obſerving the reſult of experiments; of aſcertaining the inherent qualities, and improving the various breeds of live-ſtock; where he would ſee order and ſubordination, and learn the proper treatment of ſervants; and among a variety of other branches of uſeful knowledge, the form and method of keeping farm-accounts, and of aſcertaining with accuracy the profit or loſs upon the whole and every part of his buſineſs, conſequently of bringing it as nearly as in its nature it is capable of being brought to a degree of certainty?" Such are ſome of the advantages that may be expected to reſult from eſtabliſhments of the above deſcription, if properly managed. Of their importance

importance every intelligent reader muſt be ſenſible, and at the ſame time convinced, that were the previous meaſures above recommended to the conſideration of the Board of Agriculture to be adopted, no plan is more likely to promote effectually the laudable and patriotic intentions of the members who compoſe that Board; nor any that has a better chance of producing in time a complete reform in the modes of conducting the various operations of huſbandry in theſe kingdoms. It is with peculiar ſatisfaction that the writer has it in his power to congratulate his countrymen on the eſtabliſhment of one ſuch experimental farm at leaſt. In the Report of the County of Leiceſter it is mentioned, that the members of the agricultural ſociety, which meets at the town of Leiceſter, have agreed to rent what they call an experimental farm; and which they propoſe to put under the management of the moſt intelligent practical farmers in the county. There is therefore no reaſon to doubt but that, in the courſe of a few years, many uſeful experiments will be tried on this farm, and much light thereby thrown upon the more important branches of rural affairs.

The eſtabliſhment of ſuch farms in every county would no doubt be attended with conſiderable expence, eſpecially at the outſet. But whoever will coolly reflect on the advantages that muſt neceſſarily reſult from ſuch eſtabliſh-

ments, will readily agree, that a portion of the public money could not poſſibly be more uſefully expended; as ſuch a meaſure, taken in conjunction with thoſe before ſuggeſted, would ſecure, as much as in the nature of things it is poſſible, the complete improvement of the country.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXIV.

Miſcellaneous Obſervations, containing ſome Remarks on the proper Management of Eſtates.

IT was intended in this Chapter to have brought ſeveral ſubjects under review, that are either entirely omitted in the former part of the work, or mentioned in a curſory manner only; but this the writer finds it impoſſible to do in the limits he originally preſcribed to himſelf. He ſhall therefore confine his obſervations to the ſtatement of a few particulars reſpecting the proper management of eſtates; which being of great importance to the agriculture of the country, he conſiders as meriting the attention both of proprietors and their agents.

The management of an eſtate is a truſt that, to diſcharge properly, requires the agent to be converſant in country buſineſs in general, and with the various modes of conducting it in the particular diſtrict where he reſides. Without this

this be the caſe, he muſt be often regulated in his conduct by the advice and opinion of others; ſome of whom may very probably have an intereſt in deceiving him. This appears to be the chief reaſon why ſo many of the county reports contain complaints againſt proprietors for employing perſons reſiding in towns to ſuperintend the management of their eſtates. When this happens, it is ten to one if the intereſt of landlord or tenants, or the ſpeedy and permanent improvement of the property, become ſteadily the objects of ſuch agent's attention. The management of eſtates, with agents of this deſcription, can only be a ſecondary object. Their other avocations render it frequently impoſſible for them to devote that attention to minute particulars, which, to execute the buſineſs in a proper manner, is indiſpenſably neceſſary. But, ſuppoſe they had it in their power to beſtow the requiſite attention, yet it is impoſſible, conſidering their ſituations and habits of life, that they can become thoroughly acquainted with what may be called improved practical huſbandry; and that being the caſe, it is equally impoſſible their agency can prove profitable either to the proprietor, the tenants, or the public. It will be found, by the peruſal of the following pages, that, in conducting the affairs of a conſiderable eſtate, many circumſtances muſt neceſſarily occur that require the ſkill and attention of profeſſional men,

and

and which thoſe who are either ſtrangers to country buſineſs in general, or who are not well acquainted with all the local circumſtances neceſſary to be attended to on theſe occaſions, are incapable of arranging on terms equitable for the parties concerned, or in ſuch a manner as to inſure the introduction of improved agriculture.

In deſcribing the various duties that fall to be diſcharged by the agent of an eſtate, it may not be improper to ſuppoſe him in the management of one on which it is intended, by new arrangements, to introduce a more improved ſyſtem of huſbandry. So ſituated, the moſt important buſineſs in which he can be engaged is, 1ſt, To let the eſtate into farms of proper ſize; 2dly, To aſcertain the rent or yearly value of each farm; and, 3dly, To leaſe them to ſuch deſcriptions of tenants, and on ſuch terms and conditions, as to inſure, as far as in his power, the ſpeedy and permanent improvement of the whole.

In regard to the firſt particular, enough, it is preſumed, has been already ſtated*, to convince every intelligent reader, that the greater variety there is in the extent of farms, the more extenſively will the general intereſts of the nation be promoted. In determining the proper ſize of farms on particular eſtates, ſeveral circumſtances require attention. If they be diſtant from markets;

* See Vol. I. p. 402, &c.

kets; if the ſoil be generally of indifferent quality; or if, from the backward ſtate of huſbandry, conſiderable capitals be required to execute the propoſed improvements; and if theſe are in whole, or in a great meaſure, to be effected at the tenant's expence—the farms ought to be larger than when, from vicinity to markets, the ſuperior quality of the ſoil, and the improvements that have been previouſly effected, leſs exertion and capital are requiſite for their due cultivation. This has been proved true from general experience. On inquiry it will almoſt invariably be found, that lands of the former deſcription are never cultivated to advantage, unleſs when let in pretty large farms, and to tenants who poſſeſs intelligence, exertion, and capital; whereas farms of a more moderate ſize, when favourably ſituated, in regard to markets, of good ſoil, and well improved, may, and often do, turn out profitable to all concerned.

With few exceptions, eſtates of conſiderable extent contain a great variety of ſoils. The agent, in all ſuch caſes, ought to be careful, where it can be done with any degree of propriety, to unite ſome of the bad land in the ſame farms with the ſoil of ſuperior quality; by this means the improvement of the whole will be ſecured. The writer has had occaſion to perambulate eſtates in both kingdoms; where, in the arrangement into farms, the agents had purſued an oppoſite

poſite line of conduct; where the good and bad lands had been carefully ſeparated from each other; and where, to add to the abſurdity of ſuch management, the good lands were let in large farms to wealthy tenants, while a ſet of poor people, without ſubſtance, and conſequently without the power of exertion, were employed in improving the leaſt improvable parts of the property. On the impropriety of ſuch arrangements it is unneceſſary to enlarge. Such conduct muſt appear in the higheſt degree reprehenſible to every perſon who is competent to judge of the ſubject.

In dividing eſtates into farms, agents have many opportunities of cutting off corners and pieces of land of irregular ſurface, that are of little value either for tillage or paſturage, but which, if planted with trees, would become both uſeful and ornamental. As the command of wood on an eſtate, even if it does not extend beyond the ſupply of what is neceſſary for erecting farm-buildings and conſtructing implements of huſbandry, is an object of very great importance, the allotment of the otherwiſe unimprovable ſpots for the growth of timber is therefore a circumſtance that ought always to be kept in view when making arrangements with a view to effect the complete improvement of an eſtate.

It frequently happens, in eſtabliſhing a general plan for the improvement of an eſtate, that

that plan might be greatly improved by a judicious exchange of ſome parts of the lands for others belonging to adjoining proprietors. In ſome inſtances the expence of incloſing might be greatly leſſened; in others, a more complete power of drainage might be obtained; in others, again, a quarry, or ſome other natural advantage of immenſe importance, if annexed to the eſtate, might be procured on fair and equitable terms. Theſe are objects which, if attained, would operate ſo powerfully towards the improvement of many eſtates, that intelligent agents, when ſo employed, ought always to conſider them as of the higheſt importance.

When the general improvement of an eſtate is propoſed, and the agent receives directions to let it into farms of proper ſize; as the groundwork of theſe improvements, the ſtate of the roads, among other important particulars, demands his attention. Theſe, it will, in many caſes, be found neceſſary to alter. When new ones are formed, it ought to be in ſuch directions as to afford the greateſt poſſible degree of general accommodation; as, wherever an agent deviates from this rule, and lines off roads ſo as to afford an additional ſhare of accommodation to ſome farms at the expence of others, he deviates from the path of rectitude. Good roads, formed in proper directions, are of immenſe importance in facilitating the improvement of an eſtate.

eſtate. The advantages reſulting from enjoying an eaſy means of communication with the market-towns are too obvious to require explanation; nor is it of leſs importance, that roads leading to the neareſt marl-pit or lime-quarry ſhould be formed in the beſt directions, and kept in the moſt ſubſtantial ſtate of repair.

The only other circumſtance to which it is propoſed to call the reader's attention on this part of the ſubject is, that, in making ſuch general arrangements on eſtates where neither limeſtone nor marl have been diſcovered, it is a neceſſary and proper part of the agent's duty to employ experienced people to ſearch for them. Were this rule generally attended to, many valuable treaſures of both, which hitherto lie undiſcovered, might ſoon be brought into public view; and while a prudent uſe of them would to a certainty enſure the improvement of the eſtates on which they were diſcovered, theſe improvements would neceſſarily be the means of throwing into the public markets an extent of ſuperabundant produce, of which none but thoſe who are acquainted with the effects produced by the judicious application of lime or marl can have any conception.

An agent who is capable of making theſe previous arrangements with judgment and diſcretion, and who is beſides intimately acquainted with the numerous local circumſtances that in a

great meaſure regulate the value of land in every diſtrict, will not find it either a difficult or arduous undertaking to determine what ought to be the rent of every particular farm, according to the difference that may appear in the quality of the ſoil. No ſenſible perſon, however, will expect that the writer is able to lay down rules which can be in any degree uſeful in regulating the conduct of individuals in this reſpect. Beſides the quality of the ſoil, the nature of the climate, the ſituation of the eſtate in regard to markets—the general ſtate of agriculture in the particular diſtrict, and various other local circumſtances, merit conſideration in determining what ought to be an equitable rent for a farm; to which may be added, the duration of the propoſed leaſe, the nature and extent of the improvements which the tenant is to become bound to effect at his own expence, the accommodation in regard to houſes, &c. &c. It can only be after a due conſideration of all theſe particulars, that even the moſt intelligent agent can in any caſe determine with propriety what ſhould be the rent of an eſtate or a farm. One general rule ought never to be departed from by thoſe who act as agents in determining the rent of lands; they ought to conſider themſelves as arbiters appointed mutually by proprietor and tenant. Thoſe whoſe ſituation leads them to determine in theſe matters, while they have this impreſſion

impreſſion on their minds, will never act but according to the principles of honour and juſtice: They will conſider themſelves bound to eſtimate, on the one hand, all the advantages of which the farm is poſſeſſed; and, on the other, all the diſadvantages to which it is, and during the tenant's occupancy, neceſſarily muſt be ſubjected. Having ſo done, the concluſion muſt be fair and equitable. This line of conduct, however, thoſe only who may be denominated *free agents* have a power of purſuing. In too many inſtances, it is well known, agents, in place of having an opportunity of exerciſing their own judgments, are mere ciphers, in regard to the part they are allowed to act, in determining the rents of farms. Sometimes, when a ſpirit for agricultural improvements has become general in a diſtrict, and ſometimes from other cauſes, when the leaſe of a farm is about terminating, the agent receives numerous propoſals for a renewal, together with offers of rent greatly exceeding that which he would himſelf have demanded. Under ſuch circumſtances, he naturally applies to his conſtituent for directions how he ſhould conduct himſelf. Many proprietors, it will be admitted, act, in letting their eſtates, as merchants do when they are diſpoſing of their goods: The agent is of courſe directed to cloſe with the higheſt offerer. This it becomes his duty to do; and although he may do it without making any com-

mentary on the conduct of either party, yet it is with a full conviction on his mind that they both acted improperly;—the farmer, in having made so high an offer, and the landlord, in accepting what was more than, under the existing circumstances, an adequate rent.

The fixing fair and equitable rents on farms, where he is left at liberty to do so, is no doubt an important branch of an agent's business; but many others merit an equal degree of attention. The description of tenants, whom he ought to treat with for leases of farms in preference to others, ought, after he has arranged an estate into proper-sized farms, to be the next object of his consideration. On this subject it is unnecessary to say much: every agent must be sensible of how much importance it is to introduce active, spirited, and intelligent farmers on an estate, although possessing perhaps somewhat limited capitals, in preference to those who have nothing but capitals to recommend them. By this observation, it is by no means intended to hint that an investigation into the state of the farmer's capital, before concluding a bargain, is not a necessary part of the agent's duty: on the contrary, from what the writer knows, he is satisfied it is essentially necessary; and were the rule rigidly adhered to, fewer speculations in husbandry would misgive than do at present, or rather

ther all improper ſpeculations would by that means be effectually prevented.

It is unqueſtionably the duty of an agent to aſcertain, by every proper means, that the tenant, with whom he is about to conclude for the leaſe of a farm, is in poſſeſſion of funds ſufficient for ſtocking it, and for completing ſuch improvements as it may be neceſſary for him, owing to particular circumſtances, to undertake; but it does not follow, that when two or more candidates appear for the ſame farm, an agent ought invariably to prefer him who has the heavieſt purſe. It may and does often happen, that the man, who is poſſeſſed of funds that are deemed no more than ſufficient for the undertaking, may poſſeſs alſo ſpirit, activity, and an uncommon ſhare of exertion; whereas another, who may have three times the other's capital, is indolent and inactive in the extreme. That agent, who, in letting farms on improving leaſes, would prefer the latter to the former, may be pronounced very little qualified for ſuperintending an eſtate. In aſcertaining the qualifications of farmers, another circumſtance deſerves regard: Some farmers have a peculiar genius for attending to the breeding, rearing, and general management of live-ſtock; others confine themſelves almoſt entirely to the ſtudy of the beſt methods of cultivating grain; while others, again, can divide their attention ſo equally between the cultivation

tivation of grain and the management of live-ſtock, that they can make more of a farm under that ſyſtem of management than under either of the other two. To aſſign to the ſtock-farmer the management of a farm devoted chiefly to the cultivation of grain, or to the corn-farmer the charge of a farm on which the breeding and rearing of live-ſtock muſt neceſſarily be the chief object of attention, or to deprive the other of an opportunity of combining with advantage the improvement of the breeds of the different ſpecies of live-ſtock with the due cultivation of the ſoil, muſt, without having recourſe to reaſoning on the ſubject, at once appear abſurd. Yet, in practice, how often does it happen that the natural genius of the farmer is cramped from his being placed in a ſituation where he cannot exerciſe it? In ſhort, if the improvement of the eſtate be the chief object, prudence in aſſigning to farmers ſuch farms as they are beſt qualified to manage, is not leſs neceſſary than judgment in determining what ought to be the fair and equitable rent.

The only other circumſtance above-mentioned, as naturally falling under the conſideration of an agent who is employed in the management of an eſtate intended to be let under improving leaſes, is the terms and conditions in which it is to be let, ſo as to inſure, as far as in his power, its ſpeedy and permanent improvement. Had not many

many of the particulars neceſſary to be attended to in making ſuch arrangements been previouſly enlarged upon in the courſe of the work, this would have opened a wide field for diſcuſſion; but, taking it for granted that theſe are in the reader's recollection, what appears proper further to add ſhall be compreſſed into as little bounds as poſſible.

When entering on a treaty for a leaſe, *where that liberal mode of bargaining with tenants is eſtabliſhed*, the firſt queſtion generally reſpects the propoſed period of its endurance. The writer's opinion on this ſubject has been fully explained, nor is he under any apprehenſion that intelligent proprietors or agents will be diſpoſed to controvert it. Circumſtances may indeed occur, where, owing to the particular ſituation of the proprietor, he is obliged to load the tenant with the expence of houſes and other neceſſary improvements, and in conſequence to grant him a leaſe for a greater number of years; but, as a general rule, leaſes of about twenty years endurance appear to be the moſt equitable. If they be permanent for a period much beyond that, the landlord's intereſt muſt ſuffer, both from the depreciation which experience proves to be rapidly taking place in the value of money, and from the improvements that are regularly, although gradually, taking place in the modes of conducting the various operations of huſban-

dry. If, on the other hand, they be for a much ſhorter period, the tenant has it not in his power to reap the fruits of his induſtry. It therefore becomes a duty incumbent on the agent to fix on ſome general rule in regard to the proper duration of leaſes; and equity demands, that that rule ſhould be eſtabliſhed on ſuch principles as to ſecure as much as poſſible the ſeparate intereſts of the parties moſt materially intereſted.

Proper accommodation, in regard to houſes, falls next under conſideration. Whether new houſes are neceſſary, or whether thoſe already upon the farm may be rendered ſufficient by ſome additions and repairs, is the agent's province to determine, or at leaſt it is a part of his duty to aſſign ſubſtantial reaſons to his conſtituent and to the tenant why he holds the one or the other opinion. He ought alſo to be able to judge with preciſion, in regard to the extent of houſes neceſſary for accommodating a farmer who propoſes to rent a certain number of acres to be managed according to a given rotation of cropping. Beſides this, he ſhould be ſo well acquainted with the rate of labour and the price of materials, as to be able to aſcertain with conſiderable accuracy the ſum that would be requiſite to procure the neceſſary accommodation in either caſe. And, laſtly, if his conſtituent becomes bound to advance money for the purchaſe of materials, and to defray the expence of labour in

erecting

erecting new buildings, or in repairing the old, and which, for the reaſons formerly mentioned, ought uniformly to be the caſe, it neceſſarily becomes his buſineſs to take care that the houſes be placed in a centrical ſituation, ſubſtantially conſtructed, and formed of good materials, and that the tenant comes under proper and explicit obligations in regard to the ſtate in which he is to deliver them over to the proprietor at the expiry of the leaſe.

Whoever has made the introduction of improved modes of agriculture an object of ſtudy, muſt be fully ſenſible of how great importance it is to fix upon and eſtabliſh proper rotations, in which the various ſorts of crops may ſucceed each other, with the greateſt advantage to the cultivator, and with the leaſt injury to the ſoil. There are few particulars regarding the management of eſtates, on which their ſubſtantial improvement ſo much depends, as on eſtabliſhing judicious modes of cropping, and on making it an invariable rule that theſe be rigidly and ſteadily adhered to. For reaſons formerly mentioned, it is impoſſible to lay down general rules for fixing on modes of cropping beſt adapted for any particular diſtrict. But that agent muſt be deficient in profeſſional knowledge, who cannot, from his own experience, aided by the information he can acquire from others, fix upon ſuch as, all circumſtances conſidered, are in every particular

caſe preferable to others. The truth, however, is, that ſcarcely one half of the agents in Great Britain give themſelves any trouble about the matter. They ſeem, like the lower claſs of farmers, to be wedded to ancient cuſtoms. So long as that continues to be the caſe, and that they remain ignorant of the advantages that reſult from adopting judicious rotations of cropping, agriculture, under the guidance of ſuch men, muſt languiſh. Intelligent agents well know, that no mean has hitherto been adopted which has had a more direct tendency to ſecure the permanent improvement of an eſtate, after better modes of culture have been introduced, than obliging the tenants to adhere to regular and proper rotations of cropping. It is therefore the duty of every agent, who regards his own character, the improvement of the eſtate committed to his charge, or the intereſt of the community, to eſtabliſh generally, wherever he has the management, ſuch modes of cropping as are beſt calculated to promote the mutual intereſts of landlord and tenant, and moſt effectually to prevent ſuch improvements as have been introduced from taking a retrograde motion.

Reſpecting the other circumſtances that require the agent's attention in making arrangements of this kind (as, for inſtance, the proper periods of entry and removal, the ſpecies of rent and terms of payment, incloſing, draining, &c.), the

the writer's ſentiments have been ſo fully ſtated in other parts of this work, that it would be improper again to bring theſe ſubjects under review.

In framing agreements between landlord and tenant, the agent ought to ſtudy perſpicuity of language, and to avoid by all means the inſertion of thoſe ſlaviſh clauſes and covenants which too often diſgrace deeds of this nature. In ſhort, a leaſe (as has been formerly obſerved) ſhould contain nothing but what can at any period be conſtrued a fair, equitable arrangement between the parties; and which ſhould be ſtated in language ſo plain and explicit, that every perſon of ordinary comprehenſion may be able to underſtand what was the full intent and meaning of the parties at the time. Were this line of conduct more generally adopted by thoſe who are in the habit of framing leaſes, numerous diſputes and expenſive litigations would be avoided, and peace, harmony, and a proper underſtanding between landlords and tenants, more uniformly ſubſiſt.

Although the dividing of an eſtate into farms of proper ſize, and letting them to tenants of proper deſcriptions, and on terms the beſt calculated to enſure its ſpeedy improvement, be very important branches of an agent's buſineſs; yet other matters, not leſs ſo, fall under his management, and demand a ſhare of his attention.

When an eſtate is arranged and let in the manner

manner above-mentioned, it is no doubt one great ſtep towards its improvement. But, in place of the agent's trouble being over when he has completed the agreements, he will find, if he performs his duty, that it is increaſed in a tenfold proportion. It was not only neceſſary for his conſtituent's intereſt that ſuch arrangements ſhould have been made; but having been made, it is equally ſo, in order to ſecure the object that gave riſe to them, that the tenants ſhall, with ſpirit and alacrity, implement their part of the agreement. Hence it becomes the agent's duty, by ſuperintending the improvements carrying on in the various parts of the eſtate, to ſatisfy himſelf that they are done in proper time, in a ſubſtantial manner, and according to the tenor of the agreement. Should he obſerve any of them carried on in a ſuperficial manner; if from deſign, it is his buſineſs to check ſuch proceedings; if owing to ignorance, he ought to be able, from his ſuperior knowledge and intelligence, to direct in in what manner they ſhould be conducted. In ſhort, an agent in the management of an eſtate, recently let on improving leaſes, if he pays due regard to the important truſt committed to him, will find both his time and attention fully occupied.

The receiving of rents, where theſe are regularly and punctually paid, is a very eaſily managed part of an agent's buſineſs. Where, from the

the low ſtate of agriculture, and the conſequent poverty of the country, the rents are paid in trifles, and irregularly, and particularly when it becomes neceſſary to enforce payment by legal means, the doing ſo cannot fail to be the moſt irkſome and painful of all his duties. While, on the one hand, too great forbearance is apt to lead many tenants into a careleſs indifference reſpecting their ſituation, and to prevent that degree of exertion which alone can extricate them from their embarraſſments; over rigidneſs, on the other, frequently brings ruin on the tenants, and diſcredit on the farms. The law, by ſecuring to the proprietor a preferable claim on the tenant's effects to the extent of the year's rent, for three months after the laſt moiety of it becomes due, points out, in the cleareſt manner, the line of conduct which agents in ſuch caſes ought to adopt, and the extent of credit which they are warranted to give beyond the period when, by the ſtipulations in the leaſe, the rent actually became payable. While the proprietor remains the preferable creditor, the agent has no occaſion to have recourſe to legal meaſures to enforce payment; but although that be the caſe, he ſhould, in the mean time, by reaſoning with the tenants, and pointing out to them the perilous ſituation in which they ſtand, endeavour to rouſe them into activity; whereby they may be induced to exert themſelves in ſuch

a manner, that a ſettlement may be effected previous to the period beyond which it would be committing an act of injuſtice to the landlord were the agent to grant further indulgence. Experience has proved, that much of the eaſe or difficulty of collecting rents depends on the general tenor of the agent's conduct: If he acts in a cautious, diſcreet manner, the buſineſs, in moſt caſes, may be completed without much trouble or noiſe; but if he gives way to malice or paſſion, or if he be ſo imprudent as to diſcloſe the affairs of ſuch of the tenants as he may have reaſon to conſider in a perilous ſituation, he not only acts in a manner unbecoming the ſtation in which he is placed, but diametrically oppoſite to the intereſt either of landlord or tenant; while he at the ſame time adds to his own trouble by increaſing the difficulty of obtaining payment. It is not in receiving rents only that an agent ought to exerciſe his prudence and diſcretion; the general tenor of his conduct ought to be ſuch as is beſt calculated to ſecure the confidence of his conſtituent on the one hand, and the eſteem and reſpect of the tenants on the other. By a ſteady adherence to his conſtituent's intereſt, an unremitting exertion to render the ſituation of the tenants comfortable, and a determined reſolution to forward the improvement of the eſtate, ought all his actions to be regulated. While he keeps theſe three great objects in view, it is is impoſ-

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ſible but his conduct muſt meet general approbation; nor can he fail, thus acting, to attain that which he muſt conſider his higheſt honour to have attained, namely, the confidence of his conſtituent, the eſteem of the tenants, and the merit of having forwarded in a great degree the improvement of the eſtate committed to his charge.

Nothing promotes the general cauſe of agriculture more than giving proper encouragement to improving tenants; ſuch as keep their farms in neat good order. Wherever an agent obſerves this to be regularly and uniformly the caſe, it is his duty to repreſent it to his conſtituent; and at the ſame time, by affording all reaſonable aſſiſtance, to induce the tenant to make ſtill greater progreſs towards perfection. When ſuch a tenant's leaſe is near expiring, it is an act of juſtice and ſound policy, by a renewal of it on reaſonable terms, to give him a ſubſtantial proof of the preference he holds in the eſteem both of landlord and agent. As he has improved the farm, he is not only more likely than any other man to ſet a proper value upon theſe improvements, but alſo, by his future good management, to render them permanent. But this is not the only good conſequence that would reſult from granting a new leaſe to ſuch a tenant: the doing ſo would excite a ſpirit of emulation among

the others, and the more general improvement of the eſtate would be thereby effected.

While an agent ought to endeavour to excite, and to encourage when excited, a ſpirit of induſtry and improvement among the tenants under his charge, he ought to make it equally his ſtudy to diſcountenance, in the moſt pointed manner, all thoſe who are indolent and ſlovenly. Such a conduct, on his part, may have the effect to rouſe characters of this deſcription into action, when every other means would prove ineffectual.

One other circumſtance, connected with the management of an eſtate, and the peace and comfort of the individuals concerned, ſhall be mentioned as meriting the agent's attention: That is, his avoiding, by every poſſible means, the inſtituting of vexatious law-ſuits, either at the inſtance of the landlord againſt the tenants, or at the inſtance of one tenant againſt another. Nothing can ſtamp more diſcredit on the conduct of an agent than evincing a diſpoſition to make frequent appeals to courts of law. There is not one diſpute of a thouſand that ariſes reſpecting the management of an eſtate, or country affairs in general, that involves in it a queſtion of law. That being the caſe, there are few, be they of what nature they may, that could not be more equitably adjuſted by a reference to ſenſible men reſiding on the ſpot than by the ableſt

ableſt judge that ever ſat upon a bench. Impreſſed with this idea, it ſhould be the buſineſs of every agent, when diſputes unfortunately do ariſe, to uſe his utmoſt exertions to bring the parties to agree to refer the determination of them to one or two intelligent impartial men, who, from the degree of local knowledge which, by reſiding in the neighbourhood, they muſt neceſſarily poſſeſs, are of all others the moſt competent judges, and the beſt enabled to decide impartially

Beſides the various particulars before ſtated, and which reſpect rather the minute than the general management of eſtates, it is the duty of thoſe into whoſe hands the regulating and managing landed property is committed to beſtow a ſhare of their attention on thoſe that will be afterwards mentioned; as, the proper manage- of woodlands, hedges, public drains, embankments, inland navigations, turnpike-roads, &c.

On many eſtates the proper management of woodlands is a matter in which the proprietor's intereſt is very materially concerned. While Great Britain abounded with foreſts and woodlands, theſe, when not allowed to remain in a neglected ſtate, were committed to the charge of the farmers who poſſeſſed the adjoining paſture or tillage lands, and who were underſtood to have liberty to fell ſuch timber trees, and to cut ſuch coppice-wood, as they required, either

for building or repairing houſes, for incloſing or making implements of huſbandry, or for fuel. The now almoſt general deſtruction of the ancient woodlands, added to an increaſed population, the extenſion of commerce, manufactures, and agriculture, and the conſequent introduction of more poliſhed manners, have of late years greatly increaſed the demand, and of courſe enhanced the value, of timber of every deſcription, and rendered ſuch lands as are occupied as woodlands more productive to the owners than they were at any former period. This has had the effect to induce the proprietors to exclude their tenants from any concern in the charge or management of woodlands, and to place them under the care of a deſcription of men called foreſters; and whoſe conduct is, or at leaſt ought to be, ſuperintended by the agent of every eſtate where ſuch woodlands are ſituated.

It was formerly mentioned as being part of an agent's buſineſs, when arranging an eſtate into arable, paſture, woodlands, &c. to ſelect ſuch parts of it for planting as could be rendered moſt valuable by being devoted to the growth of wood. It is alſo neceſſary, in order more effectually to promote the intereſt of his conſtituent, that he acquires a competent knowledge of the ſpecies of trees beſt adapted to the various ſoils and ſituations. This is practicable without his being

ing profeſſedly either a nurſeryman or a gardener. If, by an attentive ſurvey of various parts of the diſtrict ſimilar, in reſpect to ſoil and climate, to that of the eſtate under his charge, he diſcovers that ſome ſorts of trees thrive better than others, he has nothing to do but permit nature to be his guide in regard to the ſelection of thoſe plants that experience has proved to poſſeſs a peculiar aptitude for ſuch ſoils and ſituations: By doing ſo, it is impoſſible he can greatly err. Beſides this, he ought to acquire a general knowledge of the proper periods for thinning plantations, and of the ſafeſt and leaſt expenſive method of performing the operation. He ſhould alſo be expert at meaſuring timber-trees, ſo as to be able to check any fraud intended to be practiſed by the foreſter or others; nor ſhould a tree be permitted to be felled on the eſtate without his conſtituent or him having previouſly given poſitive inſtructions thereanent.

In order to manage ſome eſtates to advantage, it is indiſpenſably neceſſary that the agent ſhould not only know the moſt approved method of making new coppices, but alſo be acquainted with various other particulars regarding woodlands of that deſcription, eſpecially the moſt proper age for cutting the underwood or coppice, according to the uſes to which it is to be applied; ſo that the land thus occupied may turn out to the greateſt degree productive.

Con-

Conſidering the immenſe increaſe that has taken place of late years in the price and value of wood, the ſpirit for planting that has evinced itſelf in various parts of the country, and the great reaſon there is to expect that it will become general, there are few matters connected with the agency or management of eſtates to which thoſe who propoſe qualifying themſelves for that ſituation ought to devote more attention than to the proper management of woodlands. Thoſe who do ſo, thoſe who acquire knowledge ſufficient to enable them to direct the whole procedure from ſowing the ſeeds in the nurſery to felling the trees in the foreſt, will have no reaſon to repent either of the time or expence beſtowed in the attainment of this ſort of knowledge.

To the management of hedges, and indeed to the general condition of all other fences on the eſtate, it is the agent's duty to be attentive. If it has been found neceſſary, for the reaſons already mentioned, to devolve the charge of woodlands to perſons in the immediate employment of the proprietors, others equally powerful have it is preſumed, been aſſigned, when treating of fences in general, why it ſhould be conſidered a part of the agent's duty particularly to attend to the ſtate and condition of the fences. Thorn fences eſpecially ſhould be put under the immediate charge of one individual appointed by the landlord, and the agent of courſe ought to

keep a watchful eye over his conduct. Unleſs this be the caſe, it is not probable that this great mean of improvement will be carried into effect without much additional labour and expence; or if ſo, that ſuch fences will prove uſeful or permanent.

Public drains, embankments, inland navigations, turnpike-roads, and all other works tending to the general improvement of the diſtrict, as well as of each particular eſtate, fall under the review of the agents of ſuch eſtates as are to be in any degree benefited either by the eſtabliſhment or the permanency of theſe works. It is not ſufficient for the agent of one of theſe eſtates to be able to ſay, "I have done my duty," if the public drains leading through the eſtate under his charge be kept in complete good order. That may be the caſe; but if they be rendered leſs efficacious, by obſtructions of any kind being allowed to impede the courſe of the water in its paſſage through other eſtates, it is equally his duty to adopt the moſt prudent, and at the ſame time the moſt effectual, meaſures to have theſe removed.

Although the embankments oppoſite to his conſtituent's eſtate be kept in the moſt ſubſtantial ſtate of repair; yet if he diſcovers, and does not make the proper repreſentations, that other parts of the work are falling ſo rapidly into decay as to threaten, if not ſpeedily repaired, the

total

total annihilation of theſe improvements, which had probably been effected at much labour and expence, ſuch agent, ſhould a cataſtrophe of this ſort happen (and ſuch have happened), cannot conſider himſelf completely exonerated by being able to ſay, "I am not individually to blame." In all ſuch caſes, it is an agent's duty to conſider himſelf as having a general ſuperintendence over the whole, as well as a particular one over thoſe parts of the works that are more immediately under his charge.

No perſon will diſpute the infinite advantage which the agriculture of various parts of the country derives from the accommodation afforded by inland navigations. By theſe the ſuperabundant produce is tranſported to diſtant markets at little expence or trouble; while coal, manure, wood, iron, &c. are brought back in return, and on terms equally, if not more, moderate. Still, however, ſeveral of the Engliſh reports afford ample proof that theſe canals or inland navigations, although generally beneficial, are in many particular inſtances extremely prejudicial: That while the intereſt of the proprietors, whoſe eſtates are ſituated at a little diſtance from them, is promoted, that of thoſe through whoſe lands they paſs is greatly more injured than any convenience derived from the uſe of them compenſates. Several cauſes operate to produce this effect; as, the negligence of thoſe who

who frame the acts of parliament; the owners of the navigation having ſeparate and often oppoſite intereſts from the proprietors of the lands through which the canals are formed; and not unfrequently the inattention or neglect of agents. The agent of an eſtate, through which canals are formed, ſhould be extremely watchful of the conduct of the canal owners. Their intereſt, it is well known, can in many caſes be effectually promoted only by adopting meaſures that have a direct tendency to injure that of his conſtituent. That being the caſe, the agent ought on all ſuch occaſions, by a proper and ſpirited line of conduct, to repel every attempt towards encroachments; it being much more for his conſtituent's intereſt to prevent the eſtate from being injured, than, when injured, to apply to a court of law for redreſs.

The only other branch of public buſineſs connected with the management of country affairs which it appears neceſſary to mention, as claiming a ſhare of the agent's attention, is that which reſpects roads of communication from one diſtrict to another, whether turnpike or not. Unleſs theſe be ſubſtantially formed, and kept in a proper ſtate of repair, every attempt to introduce, far leſs to eſtabliſh, ſpirited agriculture, will be in vain. That theſe ſhould be formed where neceſſary, and afterwards kept in good order, is for the intereſt of commerce and manu-

factures, as well as for that of agriculture. But by whom are ſuch improvements to be ſuggeſted? or, when ſuggeſted, by whom are they to be executed? Not by the merchants or manufacturers certainly, but by the country-gentlemen, or by thoſe acting for them. It is therefore obvious, that roads and all other public works within the diſtrict ought to be conſidered by agents as falling under their management; for although in ſome diſtricts indeed the proprietors themſelves beſtow a laudable attention to the forming and repairing roads and other public works, yet this is by no means generally the caſe. Some proprietors reſide at a diſtance from their eſtates, or have eſtates in various diſtricts; others fancy themſelves ſo great, as to render it impoſſible for them to attend road or other public meetings (unleſs ſome political queſtion is to be agitated), without diſparaging themſelves; while others, again, from indolence, or a conſciouſneſs of their ignorance of all country affairs, commonly abſent themſelves: ſo that the number of diſtricts is comparatively few where the meetings, called for the purpoſe of concerting meaſures for the eſtabliſhment or repairs of public drains, embankments, inland navigations, roads, &c. are numerouſly attended by the proprietors.

So ſtanding the fact, it is unneceſſary to uſe much reaſoning to convince the reader, that thoſe who are properly qualified for ſuperintending the ma-

management of eſtates, ſhould poſſeſs, if not ingenuity to deviſe ſuch improvements, at leaſt penetration competent to judge of their probable effects, and abilities equal to direct in the execution. Unleſs they poſſeſs theſe qualifications in a greater or leſs degree, they muſt be ſanguine indeed in their expectations if they expect to riſe above mediocrity in the line of their profeſſion. But at what ſchool, it will probably be aſked, can a thorough knowledge of all theſe particulars be acquired? The writer heſitates not to anſwer, that he knows of none eſtabliſhed in Great Britain for the purpoſe. Lectures, it is true, are regularly delivered in the Univerſity of Edinburgh by the gentleman who fills the office of profeſſor of agriculture, and who is, beyond doubt, the beſt agriculturiſt in the iſland: but theſe, although highly inſtructive to his pupils, being confined chiefly to the various branches of practical huſbandry, have conſequently little or no relation to the general management of eſtates.

As long as the executive government continues to beſtow ſo little attention to the improvement of the national territory, thoſe who propoſe to qualify themſelves for undertaking the management of eſtates muſt content themſelves with picking up information on the ſubject the beſt way they can: but if the day ſhall come when the folly of ſupporting commerce and manufactures at the expence of agriculture ſhall become

generally evident, then the legiſlature will allocate a fund for the eſtabliſhment of experimental farms in various parts of theſe kingdoms. When theſe ſhall be eſtabliſhed, they will prove the beſt ſchools for the education of young men who have a view of being afterwards employed in the general ſuperintendence of eſtates. There they will have the advantage not only of converſing with thoſe who have ſtudied the ſubject ſcientifically, but occaſionally with thoſe alſo who have been for years engaged in the management of eſtates.

While the ſyſtem of ſtock-jobbing was confined to the *bulls* and *bears* of Change-alley and the monied men in and about the metropolis, the relative value of land, compared with that of government ſtock, was an inveſtigation whence, when completed, few people could have derived much benefit. Now, however, matters are very much altered. In theſe times every man poſſeſſing a few hundred pounds, even in the remote parts of the kingdom, has become a ſtock-jobber. In place of lending his money on legal intereſt to ſome perſon in the neighbourhood, who, from his extent of trade, induſtry, and general good character, was entitled to credit, he ſends it to London, and directs his correſpondent to purchaſe navy-bills, 3 *per cents.* &c. Every individual who poſſeſſes money act prudently in doing ſo, becauſe he draws a higher intereſt

intereſt than the law allows him to demand in any other caſe *; while, at the ſame time, he has it in his power to convert the government ſecurity into money at any period when he conceives he can uſe it to more advantage. It is therefore peculiarly the duty of agents to acquire a correct idea of the relative value of land, compared with the current price of government ſtock: and with a view of enabling them to make the neceſſary calculations with facility, a table is hereto annexed; nor will the intelligent reader conſider it the leſs valuable or uſeful, when he is informed that it is borrowed from a common annual pocket-book.

A

* The writer has often heard it gravely and poſitively aſſerted, nay, offered to be proved as clear as mathematical demonſtration could make it, *that the national debt was the national riches.* It may be ſo: it may be a proof of the riches of the nation, that the executive government is obliged to give eight or nine *per cent.* intereſt on every new loan, while a private individual dare not demand more than five under the ſevereſt penalties. This is mathematical demonſtration with a witneſs; but ſo ſtands the fact.

A Table of Equation of Stock, with the correspondent Value of Land.

Bank Consol. 3 *per cent.*	S. Sea Stock. 3½	Bank Conſ. 4	Bank Conſols. 5	India Stock. 8	Bank Stock. 7	Yearly purchaſe of Lands.	Annual Intereſt *per cent.* £. s. d.
3 *per cent.* Conſol. at 60 are equal	to 3½ at 70	80	100	160	140	20	0 5 0 / 5 0 0
61½	71¾	82	102½	164	143½	20½	4 17 6
63	73½	84	105	168	147	21	4 15 2
64½	75¼	86	107½	172	150½	21½	4 13 0
66	77	88	110	176	154	22	4 10 10
67½	78¾	90	112½	180	157½	22½	4 8 10
69	80½	92	115	184	161	23	4 6 11
70½	82¼	94	117½	188	164½	23½	4 5 1
72	84	96	120	192	168	24	4 3 4
73½	85¾	98	122½	196	171½	24½	4 1 7
75	87½	100	125	200	175	25	4 0 0
76½	89¼	102	127½	204	178½	25½	3 18 5
78	91	104	130	208	182	26	3 16 11
79½	92¾	106	132½	212	185½	26½	3 15 5
81	94½	108	135	216	189	27	3 14 0
82½	96¼	110	137½	220	192½	27½	3 12 8
84	98	112	140	224	196	28	3 11 4
85½	99¾	114	142½	228	199½	28½	3 10 2
87	101½	116	145	232	203	29	3 9 0
88½	103¼	118	147½	236	206½	29½	3 7 9
90	105	120	150	240	210	30	3 6 8

From

From this effort, feeble as it may be deemed by ſome, to delineate the office of an agent, and to enumerate the various particulars to which, if he diſcharges his duty with propriety, he ought to bend his attention, may be inferred, that this office is not like thoſe of placemen or penſioners, but one that affords full employment, and which, to diſcharge the various duties connected therewith, requires attention, exertion, and perſeverance: A buſineſs which can be conducted with effect by thoſe only who have read mankind and their manners at various ſchools, and who, beſides a knowledge of rural affairs in general, are alſo capable of directing in the more minute branches of practical huſbandry.

If ſuch qualifications be requiſite in thoſe who are entruſted with the management of eſtates, who can be ſurpriſed that ſo many of the county reports contain complaints againſt proprietors for employing attorneys and other perſons not duly qualified? Who can be ſurpriſed that the conduct of proprietors in this reſpect ſhould be repreſented to the Board of Agriculture as operating againſt the general introduction of improvement? When the management of eſtates, and other matters connected therewith, are devolved on people who, from their conſtant reſidence in towns, are hardly capable of diſtinguiſhing between one ſpecies of crop and another, far leſs of giving directions how any one

piece of buſineſs under their charge ought to be executed, that of receiving the rents only excepted, how can it be ſuppoſed that a general ſpirit for improvement is to be introduced? It is utterly impoſſible. As well may it be expected that a mere practical farmer may become intuitively an expert attorney, as that an attorney, or other perſon who reſides conſtantly in a town, can conduct with advantage the affairs even of a very moderate eſtate.

CONCLU-

CONCLUSION.

THE national and private advantages that may be expected to reſult from the introduction of a general ſpirit for undertaking agricultural improvements, and the neceſſity of the legiſlature beſtowing particular attention to that moſt important object, having been already fully explained, it would be improper again to enter at length on the diſcuſſion of theſe ſubjects.

In any nation where it has been aſcertained that the population is rapidly increaſing *, and eſpecially where, after the moſt minute inveſtigation, it has been found that the country has not for the preceding twenty years produced food ſufficient for the ſupport of the inhabitants, it certainly becomes the duty, and ought to be the chief ſtudy, of the legiſlature to adopt every means calculated to excite a general ſpirit for improving the national territory. The executive government of a country ſo ſituated, which does not purſue the meaſures that appear proper to be adopted in ſuch a caſe, particularly when

* This has been done in the moſt ſatisfactory manner, in regard to Scotland, by Sir John Sinclair in his Statiſtical Accounts of that kingdom.

theſe are ſuggeſted and recommended in the moſt preſſing manner (as has been recently done in this country by perſons delegated as it were by each diſtrict for the expreſs purpoſe *), cannot be ſaid to diſcharge conſcientiouſly that truſt which, for the general good of the community, is repoſed in it by the conſtitution.

Whether the members of the lately eſtabliſhed Board of Agriculture ſhall have ſo much influence with thoſe who hold the reins of government, as to induce them to turn their attention from ruinous and deſtructive wars and foreign conqueſts to cultivate the peaceful arts at home, time only can diſcover. But were that to happen; were the preſent moſt expenſive war terminated but ſix months only ſooner than, with a view of effecting a peace on what may be conceived the beſt poſſible terms, it may be; and were the money thus ſaved to be expended in improving the waſte lands of theſe kingdoms—what immenſe advantages would reſult? Were the crown-lands, or more properly the waſtes annexed to the crown, to be ſold in the manner before ſuggeſted, what an additional ſecurity would ſuch a meaſure afford to the conſtitution and for the improvement of the country? How many

* The perſons appointed to ſurvey the different counties, and to report the ſtate of agriculture in each, the obſtacles that impede further improvements, &c.

many hundreds, or rather thouſands, who have their capitals at preſent floating in the public funds, would then bring them *to anchor* on the Britiſh ſoil? And while they became more active and uſeful citizens in times of peace, they would to a man exert themſelves to keep entire that order of things by which their property would be moſt effectually ſecured. Were the legiſlature to devote but one month to the arrangement of the laws which at preſent operate ſo powerfully againſt the proſperity of Britiſh huſbandry, thoſe only who have travelled through Great Britain in ſearch of agricultural knowledge could form any idea how much improved in a ſhort time would be the ſituation of the proprietors, the farmers, and the community at large.

The writer had many opportunities of making journeys through various parts of both kingdoms, for the purpoſe now mentioned, long before the Board of Agriculture was eſtabliſhed; and more at the expence of that Board than any other individual in the iſland. He feels himſelf therefore warranted, from his own knowledge of the fact, to aſſert, that that Board is a noble inſtitution; and that if it be properly ſupported by the executive government, it will be productive of the moſt beneficial conſequences. But if it ſhall turn out that the executive government adopted the hint of making ſuch an eſtabliſhment, merely for the purpoſe of "throwing out a tub

to divert the whale," that is, with a view of amuſing the people, who were at the period engaged in contemplating the *beauties* of "Paine's Rights of Man," the reſult will prove it to have been a meaſure founded on falſe principles*. It is well known there were many farmers in England who, fifteen or twenty years ago, thought the want of leaſes, the payment of tithes in kind, the poor's rates, &c. were no great hardſhips, nor that waſtes and commons were any material loſs to the nation. Theſe men have, however, of late entertained other opinions. They now know that the farmers in Scotland are relieved from theſe hardſhips, and they feel themſelves unhappy; not becauſe their brethren on the north ſide of the Tweed are more favourably circumſtanced in theſe reſpects, but becauſe from the volumes of information which, through the medium of the Board of Agriculture, they have had acceſs to peruſe, they are ſatisfied many alterations and reforms are indiſpenſably neceſſary to render them as comfortable now as they were before they acquired ſo much additional information. If, therefore, when the yeomanry and principal

* This idea perhaps is new, and it is to be hoped without foundation. It takes its riſe from the circumſtance of no public meaſure having been adopted by government, for the improvement of the country, ſince the eſtabliſhment of that Board.

principal farmers in England are thus awakened to a ſenſe of their intereſt, and of their importance in the ſcale of ſociety, it ſhall unfortunately ſo happen that the executive government determines "to grant nothing," it would have been better for the country that the Board of Agriculture had never been eſtabliſhed; as its eſtabliſhment, connected with ſuch circumſtances, may lead to conſequences of which no man can dare to ſay he is able to aſcertain the reſult.

The private advantages, or thoſe reſulting to individuals from adopting new and better modes of huſbandry, may be ſummed up in one ſentence: They are, an increaſe in the quantity and quality of the crops, and in the value of live-ſtock, while by the uſe of more perfect implements the general expence of management is reduced, and the profits of courſe are rendered greatly more conſiderable.

The writer is aware that "the preſent ſtate of huſbandry in Great Britain," as detailed in the preceding pages, is by no means ſuch as many of the inhabitants fondly imagined it to be. Some diſtricts, it is true, are much better cultivated than others; but there is no county in the iſland where it is not practicable, by proper exertions, to increaſe to an immenſe degree the produce of the ſoil. No perſon, however, can reaſonably expect, that, while matters remain on their preſent footing, the requiſite exertions will be

be made, except perhaps by a few ſpirited individuals. While the legiſlature continues to neglect the beſt intereſts of the country, and the proprietors to keep their tenants in a ſtate of dependence, no general improvement can ever be effected. Let the legiſlature annul, or at leaſt modify, thoſe laws which preſs down the ſpirit of the farmer; let the proprietors grant leaſes on liberal terms and of moderate endurance, and eſtabliſh judicious regulations in regard to modes of cropping and general management; and let them both, in their legiſlative and individual capacities, promote every meaſure calculated to diſſeminate uſeful knowledge reſpecting rural affairs; and the ſtate of Britiſh huſbandry twenty years hence will be greatly improved beyond what it is at preſent. Were theſe, and other meaſures tending to the ſame end, to be generally adopted, the inhabitants of this iſland might exclaim, in the words of the poet of the Seaſons,

> Heavens! what a goodly proſpect ſpreads around,
> Of hills, and dales, and woods, and lawns, and ſpires,
> And glittering towns, and gilded ſtreams, till all
> The ſtretching landſcape into ſmoke decays.
> Happy Britannia! ——————————
> —————— Nature's better bleſſings pour
> O'er ev'ry land, the naked nations clothe,
> And be th' exhauſtleſs gran'ry of a world.

That this picture may be realiſed, that the corn-trade may be made once more to turn in favour

favour of this country, and to a great extent, the writer moſt ſincerely wiſhes; and that it is practicable to render theſe kingdoms an almoſt "exhauſtleſs granary," not only to this but to other nations, has, it is preſumed, been made abundantly evident to every reader who has peruſed theſe volumes with attention.

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